Upton Sinclair Answers Eugene Lyons

NEW MASSES

MARCH 8, 1938 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

Concerted Action or Isolation—Which Is the Path to Peace?

The Isolationist United Front

The Second Article of a Series by

EARL BROWDER

If This Be Heresy

A CATHOLIC DEFENDS THE LOYALISTS IN SPAIN

By John E. Kennedy

Fascist Threats in Mexico

By Marc Frank

Look at Grandma, Dorothy Thompson!

By Ruth McKenney

Thoughts While Thinking

By Robert Forsythe

Cartoons by William Gropper, Gardner Rea, Russell T. Limbach

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DANGER SIGNAL!

THE regular monthly literary section, announced for this week, cannot appear because of lack of funds.

This is a danger signal! It means that we are close to actual suspension.

We have the material for the literary section—some of it we announced last week. It is good material. Our readers, who gave enthusiastic approval to the first three literary sections, would welcome these stories, articles, and poems. But we are not able to print them.

We want to continue with the literary section. We will do so next month——

Provided the NEW MASSES does not suspend!

The question now is not *whether* the NEW MASSES will be able to survive if our appeal to our readers for a $20,000 fund is unsuccessful. The question with us now is—

Can the NEW MASSES come out—next week?

That's exactly the situation, and we cannot put it more bluntly or more accurately. Unless our readers respond, immediately, in far greater numbers than they have thus far, the NEW MASSES must suspend.

Have you got $10, $5, or $1 in your pocket—or can you get it—right now? If so, will you put that money into an envelope and mail it to the NEW MASSES at once? If every person who reads this paragraph would send even $1, we'd have the $20,000, and the NEW MASSES troubles would be over.

But——

We were not able to put out the literary section this week.

We do not know how we are going to put out the magazine next week.

We face the danger of immediate suspension. We call your attention to the danger signal. We ask for your help before it is too late.

Our address is 31 East 27 Street, New York City.

WE are happy to announce that with this issue A. B. Magil becomes one of the editors of the NEW MASSES. Magil is a veteran of labor journalism, author of several pamphlets including "The Truth About Father Coughlin," and co-author with Henry Stevens of a book dealing with fascist tendencies in the United States, scheduled for May publication by International Publishers. He was editor of the *Auto Workers' News* in Detroit from 1933 to 1935, and until recently was on the editorial board of the *Daily Worker*. He has contributed frequently to the NEW MASSES, his last article being "The Middle West Says: No Retreat" in the issue of December 7.

The subscription campaign is beginning to roll, and so are Charlie Crawfut's eyes, with that pleased I-told-you-so expression. "All they needed," he says, "was a reminder." He's offering new rewards this week (see back cover) for five trial subs (15 weeks for $1), so you don't need to wait till you corral five friends for full-year subscriptions. If every NEW MASSES reader would send in just one new subscription tomorrow, we could call off our financial drive in next week's issue—and there's nothing we'd like better.

Webster Hall, traditional spot for NEW MASSES balls, has burned down. Our April 1 ball will now be held at the Manhattan Opera House, a much larger hall. We, therefore, expect a much larger turnout than ever before. We have been extremely fortunate in obtaining the services of Eli Dantzig and his orchestra, which played at the President's inaugural ball. The famous Big Apple will be presented by Arthur Murray. Tickets are $1 in advance, and $1.50 at the door. Here is your chance to have a good time and also help the NEW MASSES raise its quota of $20,000.

William Gropper, whose cartoon appears on page 10, will have an exhibit at the A.C.A. Gallery in New York. The exhibit opens on March 5 and will run for two weeks.

The painting by F. Horowitz reproduced on page 16 is part of the exhibition of work by the artists' group of the Y.K.U.F. (Jewish Cultural Coöperative) on view until March 25 at 21 East 17th Street, in New York City.

Who's Who

EARL BROWDER's new book, *The People's Front*, in its first week of publication, has already sold over 10,000 copies. . . . John E. Kennedy is secretary to Congressman Jerry J. O'Connell, co-author with Byron N. Scott of "The Active Search for Peace" (issue of February 22). Last year he organized the Congressional Secretaries' Guild, a C.I.O. affiliate. . . . Upton Sinclair's latest novel, *The Flivver King* is being distributed in mass quantities as part of the orgnaizing drive of the United Automobile Workers of America. . . . Ruth McKenney writes frequently in the *New Yorker*. Her sketch in this issue will be part of a forthcoming book. . . . Dr. Howard Selsam is an assistant professor of philosophy at Brooklyn College. A book of his, entitled *What Is Philosophy?* has been announced for early publication by International Publishers. . . . Richard Wright has just won the first prize of $500 in a nationwide contest among W.P.A. writers.

Flashbacks

"THE Supreme Court attempts to command the people of the United States to accept the principle that one man can own other men; and that they must guarantee inviolability of that false and pernicious property," exploded Senator Seward when Justice Taney of the Supreme Court handed down the Dred Scott decision, March 6, 1857. "Never! Never! Let the Court recede. Whether it recedes or not, we shall reorganize the Court, and thus reform its political sentiments and practices." . . . Another Supreme Court decision on March 10, 1919 affirmed the position of man as something closely resembling property. This time whites as well as Negroes were included, and the possessor was our imperialist state. Conviction of Gene Debs for obstructing the recruiting service during the War was unanimously upheld. . . . International Women's Day is American in origin. It began in this country in 1908, but was celebrated first on a world-wide scale, March 8, 1911. . . .

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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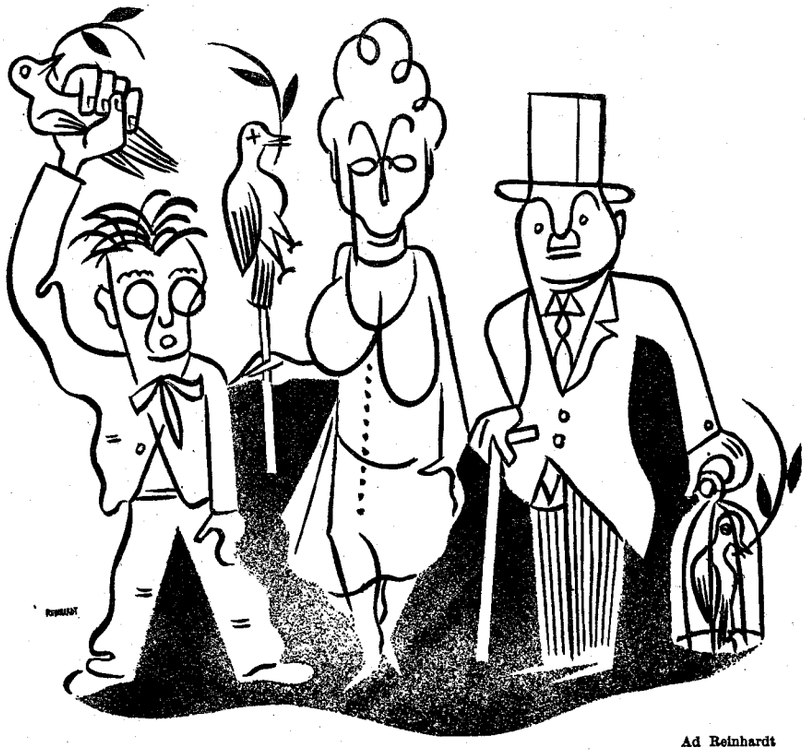
NEW MASSES
MARCH 8, 1938



Ad Reinhardt

The Isolationist United Front

CONCERTED ACTION OR ISOLATION: WHICH IS THE PATH TO PEACE?

By Earl Browder

IT will help throw light into the confused discussion on concerted action vs. isolation, to examine the unprincipled and undeclared "united front" among the isolationists, which they put forward as a camp of "peace advocates."

First of all, their "left wing": This found its classic expression in the "round robin" to the *Nation,* rebuking that journal for rejecting isolationism (*Nation,* January 22, p. 111). In the list of forty-five signers, we discern the following groupings: open Trotskyites, who for several years have worked in alliance with the fascist powers on the principle of serving their aims by "ultra-revolutionary" catchwords; Lovestoneites, who since 1935 passed to the Trotskyist position on all world issues; the Socialist Party leaders, since 1936 pitifully dependent upon Trotsky for all their central thoughts; the extremist-pacifists, for whom all struggle is anathema and destructive of social ends, and who, therefore, openly advocate capitulation before aggression at home and abroad; the primitive-Christians, who reach the same goal through ethical, "turn-the-other-cheek," considerations; the practical politicians, who see some future left in exploiting the naïve isolationism of the middle-western farmers and small-townsmen; and officials of the auto workers' union who adopted a pro-Japanese resolution, under the influence of Trotskyist-Lovestoneite intriguers.

The claim of this group to be a "left wing" is based upon its open or implied adherence to the Trotskyist thesis that democracy is not worth defending, that its defense will only hasten its own destruction, that there is no essential difference between democracy and fascism, that the victory of fascism is inevitable, that fascism and war may even prove to be a good thing because they will hasten the downfall of capitalism and the consequent rise of a new society. The "left wing" coloration is thus made an incentive to take up more boldly the slogans of the fascists themselves, and thus transform anti-fascist and peace sentiment into helpers of the fascist world-plan.

Typical of the "center" of the isolationist united front, is David Stern and his newspaper chain, headed by the New York *Post.* Ostensibly "open-minded" and moved by immediately practical considerations to the exclusion of dogma, Stern and his associates drive consistently to the same end of extreme isolationism.

The "right wing" of the isolationist agitators and propagandists among the masses, is typically represented by Father Coughlin, by the *American Mercury,* and the Hearst press. In them we have the case of isolationism presented in its most openly fascist form, with fully developed nationalism, chauvinism, and frank admiration for the fascist dictators, as chief characteristics.

There is no hard-and-fast division between these various groups. On the contrary, there is quite a free collaboration between them. Thus, O. G. Villard, "liberal," extends his public congratulations to Father Coughlin for returning to the air to uphold the isolationist cause, without even a blush for his new ally. Thus Norman Thomas and Hearst collaborated last November to blanket the news of the historic Congress for Peace and Democracy, with four and a half million members represented, by an isolationist blast against the congress written by Thomas, which was combined with a "Catholic" picket line to identify the congress with "Communism." Thus Trotskyites boldly collaborate in the fascist *American Mercury,* and Bruce Bliven writes them "explanatory" letters.

The main body of the isolationist propaganda machinery consists of the majority of

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the big newspapers of the country. They plug along, most of them, without any special ideological slant, broadcasting any and every variety of isolationism with magnificent impartiality. Equally impartial is the support given to all by the Nazi and fascist organizations in the United States, and by the open apologists for Japan.

This broad united front of the isolationists of all stripes is particularly in evidence in the past six months, since the great stream of public sentiment began to run in the direction of concerted action for peace, and especially since President Roosevelt's famous speech of October 5 in Chicago. All the isolationists are especially vindictive against the President because of that speech. But, being good practical politicians, they would like to avoid a head-on collision with the broad personal popularity of the President. Therefore, their arguments are seldom directed openly against the President; since the Communists support the President on this issue, and since the Communist Party is a small and weak group as yet, they find it convenient to direct their main polemic against the Communists. That may not be particularly honest and frank, but at least it is "smart" political tactics.

Our isolationists are, as a rule, desirous of keeping all discussions of war and peace quite separated from issues of domestic policy, and as far as possible on the plane of abstractions. But foreign policy is inevitably tied up very concretely with all issues of domestic life. Therefore, we will expect to find these groups and individuals prominent in the agitation of isolationism also tending to take up a common view on the chief domestic problems of the day.

In this expectation we will not be disappointed. Take the issue of Roosevelt's proposals for curbing the Supreme Court. That was the question which most stirred our political life in 1937, which most hastened the growing political realignment of the country. And on this question, we will find at least 95 percent of the individuals and groups most vocal in fighting against the President's indication of a positive peace policy, were equally vocal (and equally vicious) in opposing his proposal to deflate the Supreme Court. The same instincts, or the same logic, or the same class interests, which bring them to a common position on the one question, seems to work with equal precision to bring them to a common front on the other question. That is, of course, only natural and to be expected.

Behind all the differences between the various groups of isolationists, certain revealing uniformities can be traced in the structure of their arguments. Since it is these uniformities which constitute the basis for their united front, it is worth while tracing a few of the chief ones.

For example, examine the isolationist logic in evaluating the recent resignation of Eden from the British government, and Chamberlain's open conciliation with fascist aggression. One and all, the isolationists denounce the British course as a crime against humanity, and a proof that they were always right when they said it was impossible to establish a "united front of the democratic nations" that would include Britain; and then, in the same breath, they proceed to "prove" by the British example, that the only correct course for the United States is one closely copied after that of Chamberlain—that is, to hell with the rest of the world, make our own arrangements, and above all, keep out of the way of the bandit nations, the fascist aggressors, and speak softly to them.

All groups of isolationists are agreed that the United States is, under all circumstances, incapable of pursuing an effective peace policy in collaboration with other nations. They disagree only in their explanations why this is so. Some of them, like Norman Thomas, look upon the United States as equally a bandit with the fascist governments; the only way to keep the United States from doing mischief is to keep it from doing anything at all. Others, like many of the pacifists, think that on the contrary, the United States is of a Christlike purity of morals, which can only be preserved by cutting off all contacts with other nations. Still a third, and the largest, group is convinced that even with the best intentions in the world, the United States goes into world affairs mortally handicapped by the superior abilities of other nations, especially Great Britain, to trick the United States out of our very shirt and pants; we are like the country boy going to the city, sure to be sold a gold brick by the city slickers. But however much they differ as to the reasons, all isolationists are agreed upon the conclusion that the United States must at all costs keep out of world affairs and make no difficulties for the bandit nations.

Another item of common agreement among isolationists is their agreement that the Communists are a dangerous and pernicious influence, and especially so because of our advocacy of concerted action as the path to peace. The various groups place varied emphasis upon this idea, but all are agreed that the danger from this Communist influence is much more serious than the danger from fascist trends. For the Trotskyites, whose one function in life is to destroy the Communist movement by all means, the Communists are not only the chief but practically the only danger to world peace. Norman Thomas and his Socialist friends strongly incline to the Trotskyist view. The other groups adopt the idea to the varied degrees they are able to exploit it.

Most important of all their common ideas is the isolationist conception of the Soviet Union as the chief menace to the peace of the United States. It is of no consequence to demonstrate to them that the Soviet Union is consistently, and from its very nature, an advocate of peace and prepared to coöperate with all peace-loving peoples to preserve peace. All evidence to prove that only convinces the isolationists all the more of the insidious role of the Soviet Union which would inveigle the United States into war precisely through the common interests of the Soviet Union and the United States in maintaining peace. They have a very strict logic in their inveterate hatred of the Soviet Union. It consists of the main proposition, that the only way the bandit nations can be prevented from making war is to give them whatever they demand; the secondary proposition, that the Soviet Union, no matter how much it wants peace, will never agree to surrender to the fascists as the path to peace; and conclusion, that therefore the Soviet Union is the enemy of peace, and every one who wants peace by surrender to fascism should dissociate himself from the Soviet Union.

When one goes over all the ideas generally agreed upon among all the isolationist groups, ideas which form the basis for their united front among themselves, then one cannot but be struck by another feature of these ideas. They are not only held in common by the isolationist groups, but they form the basis of possible agreement with Hitler, Mussolini, and the Mikado; the ideologists of the bandit nations are closely in sympathy, if not in agreement, with all these ideas. In fact, they consider the victory of these ideas in the United States as an essential step toward the general victory of fascism throughout the world. The ideas of isolationism are a necessary part of the fascist system in its march toward world conquest.

Thus it comes about that the sharper grows the world situation, the more is peace and democracy endangered by the advance of aggression by the bandit nations, then all the more do the isolationists, fighting desperately for withdrawal from world affairs by the United States, proceed step by step to prove as a desperate last resort that democracy is an illusion which it is not worth risking anything to preserve; that peace itself is a questionable goal, not worthy of serious effort to maintain; that the natural, inevitable, and perhaps desirable condition of the world is a wild and bloody scramble for its redivision; that in such a condition, the rule is each nation for itself, and the United States has nothing to do but keep its eyes open, preparing to join in the general blood-bath only after all others have seriously weakened themselves by fratricidal struggles which will open the way for America to grab the lion's share at a minimum risk for itself.

These logical conclusions of isolationism are, of course, not yet drawn consciously by all or even by a majority of those advocating isolation. But the more logical and consequential minds amongst them are visibly moving in that direction. They will all soon come to the point, where they must either accept this as the main current of their thought, or else make a clean break with isolationism and take the only effective path to peace—the path of concerted and organized action by the peace-loving majority of the peoples of the world and their governments.

(This is the second in the series of articles by Earl Browder, general-secretary of the Communist Party. Mr. Browder will answer all questions based on his articles which readers may submit.)

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A Letter to Eugene Lyons

By Upton Sinclair

THE FOLLOWING LETTER by Upton Sinclair was written in reply to an open letter addressed to him by Eugene Lyons.

We are glad to present to our readers Mr. Sinclair's eloquent answer to Lyons—that highly moral "Socialist" who is devoting all his time to slandering the Soviet Union and who, while a correspondent there, did not disdain to speculate on the "black bourse" and to smuggle valuable art objects out of the country, thus robbing the Soviet workers and peasants of the very gold which might have been used for improving their "terrible" conditions.

We could demur with regard to a number of points made by Mr. Sinclair. But the general spirit of his letter is so essentially human and sound that we prefer not to dwell on those statements—of minor importance—to which we take exception. We must, however, draw attention to two major historical errors into which Mr. Sinclair falls.

One is his erroneous description of the Bolshevik revolution as having been made by "a little group of revolutionists who managed to seize power." The October revolution was a mass revolution of workers, peasants, and soldiers; the Bolshevik Party at that time numbered several hundred thousand members, who were the vanguard of the broad masses in their democratic struggle for peace, land, and freedom.

Second, Sinclair erroneously places the "birth of Trotskyism" as an event subsequent to the adoption of the people's-front policy by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International in 1935. Trotskyism is an old disease. Its recrudescence in its most virulent form of sabotage, treason, and terror as traced in the Soviet Union, according to the confessions of the Trotskyites themselves at the Moscow trials, goes back to the beginning of this decade, *i.e.*, the difficult years when the Soviet Union was engaged in the first major advance toward Socialism in city and country. Kirov was assassinated in December 1934.

THE EDITORS.

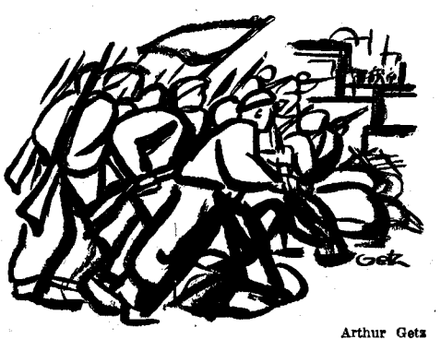
MY DEAR EUGENE LYONS:

I HAVE your open letter on the subject of my views on Russia. Of course I shall not "misunderstand the spirit of it." You have a perfect right to criticize my published ideas, and I am interested in your reactions. But I am not convinced, and will tell you why.

The Russian people suffered many centuries of oppression, they had no democratic institutions, and they did not know what we call "liberty." Modern ideas were kept from them, and the great bulk of the people were degraded peasants only recently out of serfdom, besotted with drink and sunk in superstition. After three years of dreadful suffering and defeat in war, a little group of revolutionists who believed in collectivism managed to seize power. I did not believe they could hold it for six months, but they have managed to hold it for twenty years. My error in judging makes me humble about giving them advice now.

The little group of revolutionists have been enforcing their collectivist ideas upon a hundred and seventy million people. At the same time they have been giving these people education of a sort. You doubt the benefits of this education, saying that "only words written by the ruling clique may be read." Will you really defend such a statement, or is it merely a bit of rhetoric? More than three million copies of my books have been translated and published in Russia. They have recently circulated something like half a million copies of *No Pasaran,* and are now proceeding to do the same with *The Flivver King.* Naturally, this inclines me somewhat in their favor; but I hasten to add that they have also circulated many more million copies of the works of Tolstoi and of Pushkin, to say nothing of Marx and Engels. How many students have come out of their high schools and colleges I do not happen to know, but it must be many millions in the course of twenty years. You appear to believe that all the minds of all these persons are entirely enslaved; but I am unable to believe this, and I think that if the ruling group in Russia has committed a "betrayal of the basic principles of Socialism, workers' democracy," the educated workers will find it out in the course of time and will find a way to get that which has so elaborately been promised to them for the past twenty years.

Let us return to our Russian history. The three years of foreign war were followed by a year of revolution and several years of civil war, during which most of the resources of Russia were destroyed and an extreme fanaticism was begotten. Personally, I never permit myself to think about Russian affairs without remembering those years of anguish and the fury of passion which they awakened in the hearts of the struggling workers. Defending themselves against world capitalism represented by a score of nations, including the United States of America, the Russian workers learned to hate counter-revolutionary conspiracies and to put them down. Even in our comparatively peaceful America I also learned something about capitalist counter-revolution and the infamies to which it will resort to defend itself and its privileges. I am never going to forget what I learned, and it enabled me to understand the determination of the Russian people to defend their regime.



Arthur Getz

From my point of view, the Russians have been at war during the past twenty years. It has been not merely a war of blockade, of intrigue and sabotage and spying and wholesale lying, it has also been a preparation against military attack, a mere lull between battles. I have known for twenty years that the Russians were going to be attacked again whenever reaction felt that it had the power. I have told them that on every occasion and have never blamed them for defending themselves and preparing for further defense. I understand that their political liberties in the meantime have been and could be only such as are possible for a people at war; and if you remember the years 1917-1920 in our own country, you know that they are not the ideal civil liberties such as we all hope to enjoy in the coöperative commonwealth of the future.

And now have come Mussolini, and then Hitler, and then the Mikado. I used to be asked, during our EPIC campaign, to define fascism, and my answer was "Fascism is capitalism plus murder." A year or more ago, addressing the Western Writers' Congress, I made the statement that "Al Capone is a scholar, a statesman, and a gentleman compared with the men who are running Italy and Germany today." The events which have come to our unhappy world since that time caused me to add Franco and the Japanese gangsters to that list. Whatever you may think about them, you can hardly dispute the fact that Russia is for all practical purposes at war today. Russian technicians are helping the democratic people of Spain to defend their existence. Russian technicians are helping the people of China to the same end. Russia is fighting not merely Franco, but Hitler and Mussolini in Spain. And I take it you will agree with me that if the reactionaries can have their way in Spain and in China, they will be that much nearer to their final goal, the destruction of collectivist institutions in the Soviet Union. Hitler has told us quite frankly that he intends to have the Ukraine, and the young Japanese militarists have been no less frank on the subject of the eastern half of Siberia.

Again and again Russia came into the conference of Europe and proposed complete disarmament. Our reactionary newspaper columnists are quite sure that this was a bluff; but what a simple matter it is to call a bluff if you have the cards! Why didn't the war lords of the militarist nations accept Litvinov's propositions? Why didn't they pretend to accept them? The answer is because every one of them understood clearly that a collectivist economy can get along without colonies and

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foreign trade, whereas a profit economy must have these things and must increase them, and therefore is driven continually to fresh aggressions under penalty of revolution at home.

It is my belief that the disarmament proposals repeatedly made by the Soviet Union enable that country to stand before the world with clean hands, and place the blame for the wars which are coming upon the nations which refused the proposals and have gone on ever since to prepare for worse aggressions against the Soviet Union. Seeing this war clearly before us, I say that friends of progress have no choice whatever except this choice: do you want to see the Soviet Union overthrown, or do you want to see Hitler, Mussolini, Franco, and Araki overthrown? That is the question of our time for every Socialist, every progressive, and every friend of mankind. That does not mean, as you suggest in your letter, that I "seriously propose concealment of the truth as the solution of the problem of Russia." It does mean that when I criticize what Russia is doing, I criticize it as a friend who understands.

Long ago I learned the bitter lesson that I cannot make this world what I think it should be—at least not in this lifetime. If I could wipe terror and cruelty from the world by a stroke of the pen, assuredly I would be making such a stroke at this moment, instead of explaining to you and a few of my fellow Socialists that I am forced to choose between two regimes of force which are in a death-struggle with each other. It so happens that I believe one of these regimes is capable of progress and improvement, while I believe that the other means death to all hope of progress to mankind for all future time.

This you describe as "apologetics for mass brutality, official sadism, and totalitarian suppression of elementary human rights." These are powerful and all-inclusive words, and I think they fail to allow for the opening of hundreds of thousands of schools and the education of a hundred million illiterate people. I could give a long list of improvements in Russia which I think you fail to allow for in your letter to me. You point out the fact that I have not visited Russia, and suggest that this indicates my "panicky fear of facing the facts." As it happens, this suggestion would apply to all the other countries of the world, because I have not been outside the United States since the World War. The "panicky fear" which I have felt has been caused by the riveting of capitalist shackles upon the people of my own country, and I have judged that the best thing I could do was to stay at home where I really understand the institutions and conditions and can really give advice.

At the same time I have had many friends, some of whom have traveled to Russia every year and brought me back first-hand accounts. Also many Russians have come over here and have given me an opportunity to know them and judge them. I could not withhold a smile when you cited to me the case of Eisenstein as an example of "outlawry of progressive and modernistic and experimental urges in cultural life [in the Soviet Union]." Well, my dear Eugene Lyons, you probably know many times as much about the Soviet Union as I know, but one Russian phenomenon I can claim to know thoroughly, and that is Eisenstein. I once tried to help him make a picture. I won't go into details of the sad story, but will just say that through two years of experience which came near to ending my life I learned a great deal about the difficulties which the administrators of the Soviet Union have encountered in endeavoring to build order out of the chaos placed at their disposal.

Also, I have known a great many American Communists, and I have learned from them. I have known some good ones and some exceedingly bad ones—I doubt if you could have known any worse inside the Soviet Union. As you know, up to three years ago it was the dogma of the Communists that we Socialists were all social fascists, and during our EPIC campaign in California I had many trying times with Communists at the mass meetings at which I spoke throughout the state. They used to bring armsful of leaflets into the galleries and at the height of my most eloquent climaxes they would shower down arguments upon the audience below. I used to make it a point to ask for one of the leaflets and read it to the audience and answer it there and then, explaining why I did not think that we could have a Russian revolution in America right away, and why I thought it was a mistake to call for it at any time.

Now, as you know, the Communist Parties all over the world have changed their "line." I do not mean to be egotistical and imply that they have taken my advice, but it is a fact that what they are now saying and doing is what I urged them for many years to say and do: to support and coöperate with the democratic peoples. As soon as I read of the adoption of this new "line," I knew that it would not please some of the bitter fanatics who preached the dogma of the permanent revolution for so many years that they could not open their eyes to the meaning of Mussolini, Hitler, Franco, and Araki. I remember saying to my wife in the very first days of the new "line" that there would be a split in the Communist Parties all over the world and there would be sabotage and attempts at revolution inside Russia. So you see I was not surprised by the birth of what is called "Trotskyism," and neither was I surprised by the trials and executions in Russia.

You speak of the "obscene show trials." I have searched your letter for any hint of the possibility that some men may actually have been guilty of waging war against the present Stalin regime inside Russia. I searched also in vain for any hint as to what Hitler and Araki, to say nothing of the militarists of Britain, Poland, Rumania, etc., may have been doing, or trying to do, inside the Soviet Union. To me it seems the most elementary of political and military inevitabilities that secret war should be going on against the Soviet Union, and that reactionary intriguers provided with unlimited funds should be making whatever use they can of revolutionary extremism inside that country.

Arguments have a way of centering about personalities, and the question has become whether Trotsky accepted help from Hitler. I do not know anything about that, and I am not especially interested in it, because Trotsky does not loom that much in my mind. But I know that when unlimited funds are available, and when subtle and highly trained agents are working inside a political movement to use it, they can find plenty of ways of passing out money while keeping secret the sources from which the money has come. I know just as well that there are German and Japanese agents in Russia today posing as being ultra-left-wingers, as I know that there are spies of Ford and Weir and Girdler in the American labor movement, posing as being Communists and doing everything they can to lead the movement into violence and disorder so that it may be discredited.

I know this must be so; and then one day in the *Saturday Evening Post* I came upon the articles of Mr. Littlepage, an American engineer, who is without any trace of radicalism, or even of understanding radicalism, and he tells how during his ten years of service in the mining industry of the Soviet Union he witnessed the wholesale sabotage and speculated as to its causes. He tells about one of the high-up officials whose acts of sabotage in the purchase of machinery he witnessed in Berlin; and it so happens that this individual was one of the men who confessed to those very same acts in the public proceedings which you describe as "obscene show trials."

I have been very curious to know what would be the effect of the Littlepage revelations upon my American Socialist friends who have made up their minds that the Russian trials were all frameups. I shall be interested in your comments upon them.

I have written you a long letter—longer than your letter to me. The subject is the most important one of our time. It is true, as you say, that my heart is "in the right place." I want to know the truth and to tell it as well as I can. It is also true that I have been studying the problem of Russia as earnestly as I know how for twenty years. There have been few days during that period that I have not sought some new facts and pondered them. I have had many a heartache over the things which have happened in Russia—so different from what I hoped for. I watched Gorky all through this period, and I know how he suffered and how more than once he wavered. But in the end he made up his mind that the Soviet regime was the best hope for the workers of Russia, and that is my conclusion today. I do not think it is going to change so long as Mussolini, Hitler, Franco, and Araki continue to menace the world with a return to the middle ages, and so long as the Soviet Union continues to hold [illegible] to America, Britain, and France the invitat[illegible] join her in standing against this menace.

Sincerely,

UPTON SINCLAIR.

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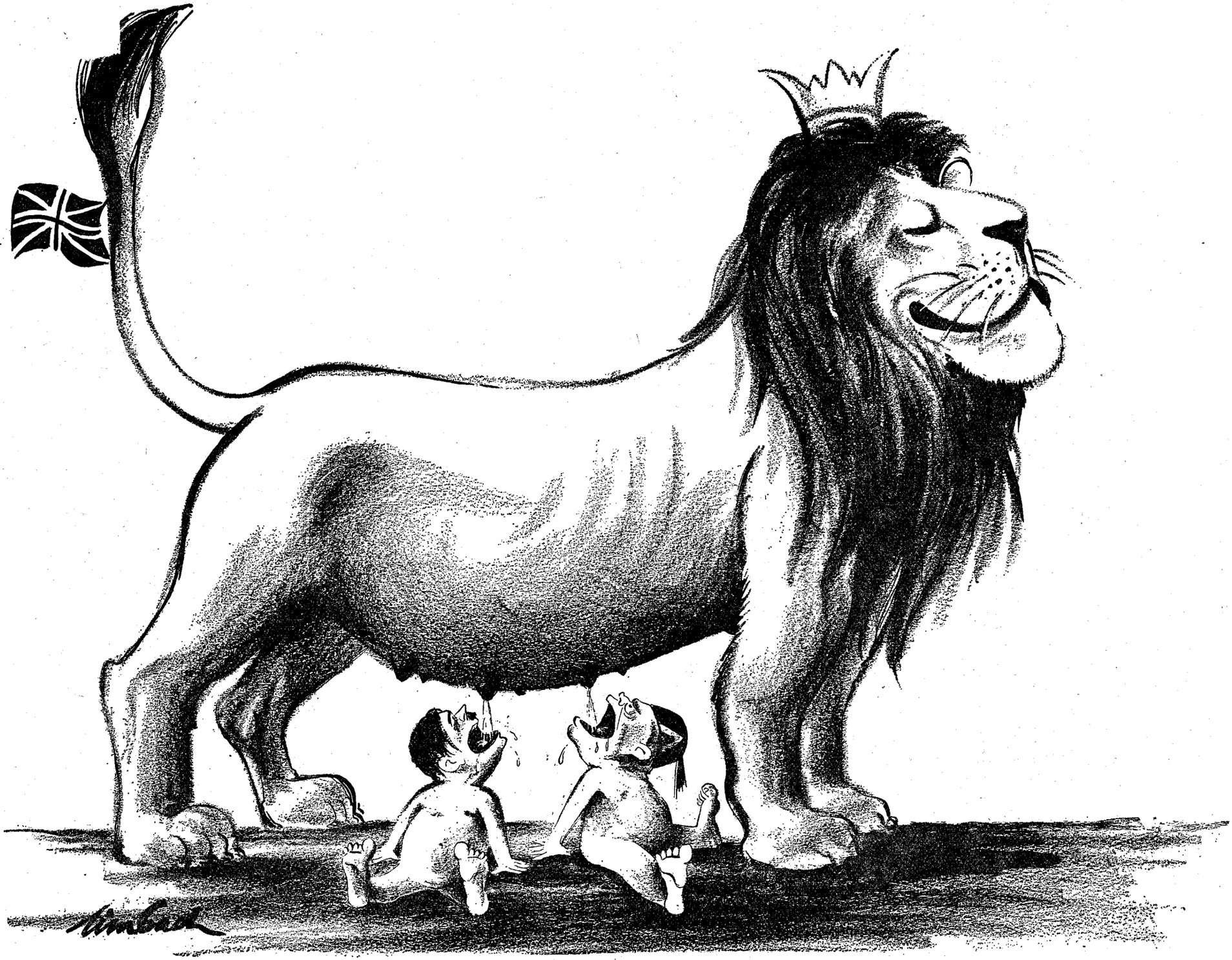

Russell T. Limbach

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Fascist Threats in Mexico

By Marc Frank

IN Mexico at present there are only two possible backers of any Mexican Franco —Germany and American reactionaries. Britain, despite the immense strategic and economic importance of the Poza Rica oil field—the only British-controlled field of any size not dependent upon Mediterranean communications—is definitely continuing its Ethiopian policy of allowing someone else to do the dirty work.

Mexico is one of the most important sections of Herr Bohle's Nazi foreign bureau, according to secret papers discovered in the German consulate in Barcelona last year. For two reasons: it is one of the few surviving Latin-American democracies, and it can be of vast strategic value in keeping several divisions of American troops engaged on the Rio Grande, while Japanese allies harass the Pacific, and German and Italian colonies inside the United States cause internal disorders. It is essential to recall that the three surviving Latin-American democracies (after their fashion)—Mexico, Panama, and Colombia—are precisely those which command the United States border and the Panama Canal.

Germany is Mexico's third biggest customer. Highly-placed German businessmen continually make good-will speeches. German firms have made many attempts to participate in Mexican business transactions. Britain, absorbed in the rearmament "shadow-plan," has repeatedly been unable to fill Mexican industrial orders. Some United States credit operations, politically part of the "good neighbor" policy, have also been moves to prevent German incursions into this field.

There was, provably, German money behind the Gold Shirts. There is little doubt that other semi-fascist organizations have received German help. In Guatemala, on Mexico's southern border, the nasty little dictatorship of Jorge Ubico, president of the Central American Anti-Communist (*i.e.*, anti-democratic) League, was one of the first to recognize Franco and has permitted the entry of smuggled German arms. A secret armed civilian movement will suddenly back Ubico in any move against South Mexico, without the necessity of the present embarrassment which might be caused by too obvious Guatemalan rearmament. Guatemala is not a long way from the strategic Isthmus of Tehuantepec, and on the route are the big German coffee plantations of Chiapas. Washington has just waived the right to transport troops across the Isthmus, no doubt preferring the north-south facility of the Pan-American highway.

Big support for a Mexican Franco may come from reactionary elements in the United States. The Knights of Columbus aided the so-called Cristeros, who were in reality simply *gavillas*, or roving bands of armed men under local chieftains, rarely Catholics at all. The A. F. of L. aided the "Red battalions" in Carranza's time and in fact smashed the reactionary Huerta. In Harding's time the American oil companies openly hired "white guards," and these still exist in the fields of the late Andrew Mellon's Mexican Gulf Oil at Prieta, where a union organizer has even less chance of survival than in any Alabama "open shop" town. There is no doubt whatever that Cárdenas would find it hard to survive if Washington withdrew its support.

THESE calculations and reminiscences are certainly in the minds of the Mexican would-be Francos. Even the plan of campaign is not hard to guess, because it is traditional. All Mexican insurrections begin in the North, because arms deliveries are easy, because the northern Mexicans are fighters, and because both industry and cultivation are more intense and any crop or credit failure brings correspondingly intenser misery. Madero, Villa, and the "Sonora triumvirate"—Obregon, Calles, and de la Huerta—which ruled Mexico for fourteen years, all began in the North.

Reactionary influences are strong in the states of Lower California, Sonora, Sinaloa, Durango, Nuevo Leon, Tamaulipas, San Luis Potosí, and Jalisco. These form a huge horseshoe, with Mexico City not far from the points. In the vast desert expanses of Chihuahua and Coahuila, although the authorities are leftist, there is a great deal of agrarian discontent, easily exploited by rebel demagogues.

Governor Yocupicio of Sonora, a full-blooded Indian, is reputed to be a tool in the hands of the big landowners on the Sinaloa border, where the governor is also definitely reactionary. Ex-President Abelardo Rodriguez, one of the wealthiest men in Mexico, practically owns Lower California. There are ten thousand Gold Shirts in Monterey, capital of Nuevo Leon, acting as vigilante strike-breakers in Mexico's most notorious open-shop city. In Jalisco and Coahuila, and again, farther South, in Guanjuato and Queretaro, there are a large number of Cristeros. In San Luis Potosí, General Saturnino Cedillo keeps up the last remaining Mexican private army, estimated by his propagandists at sixteen thousand men, but more probably not numbering more than fifteen hundred. In Puebla, the textile center, lying across the precipitous Mexico City-Vera Cruz road, the C.R.O.M. (Mexican Regional Confederation of Labor) has its stronghold at Orizaba, and the governor, Maximinio Avila Camacho, brother of the minister of war, who is a large landholder in this state, is accused of reactionary activities.

Thus, an encircling movement from the North, together with a drive from the Guatemalan border, could seriously embarrass any government in Mexico City. The possibilities for such a movement exist.

Two possible Francos have been somewhat overpublicized: Cedillo and Nicolas Rodriguez.

Cedillo, a pure-blooded Indian with a soldierly reputation, an ex-Villista, had his chance last October. Cárdenas, who had had the courage to expel the strong men, Calles and Morones, made short work of his minister for agriculture, when he discovered his friend's subversive activities. Cedillo made no resistance. He prefers to wait, allowing his supporters to bode darkly. He himself is of moderate tastes. He is very comfortable on his ranch at Las Palomas. It would take a lot of money to move him. He has never been more than a name with which to scare Cárdenas's friends, completely without effect. He is, in fact, a common example of those Mexican generals who have greatness wished upon them. His state is certainly reactionary. Church schools operate, union organization is hindered; but the C.T.M. (Confederation of Mexican Workers) recently carried out a completely successful twenty-four-hour general protest strike in Cedillo's capital against the local authorities' slack handling of the drinking-water supply.

Nicolas Rodriguez's Dorados or Gold Shirts claim eight hundred thousand members. Their true strength is about forty thousand. Before his expulsion there were some thirty thousand in and around Mexico City. Their San Antonio organizer recently replied, when asked how many Gold Shirts there were in the United States: "There is one in every patriotic Mexican." They propose, he said, merely to "change the actual order in Mexico, destroying the Communist Cárdenas government." "Cárdenas is the left arm of Stalin in Mexico, without his own personality." Cárdenas, too, state the Dorados, is completely under Trotsky's thumb. The Dorados are employing the same tactics as the Spanish Phalanx just before the civil war: that of "continuous agitation." All young fascist parties, lacking real mass basis and a genuine social program, employ it.

As in Spain, a Mexican Franco would almost inevitably arise within the government or army itself, whatever outside backing was responsible for the conception. Cárdenas has done a great deal to weed out obvious rebellious generals and to improve the terrible conditions. A Mexico City weekly, however, recently stated that fourteen of the twenty-five divisionary generals and sixty of the one hundred and twenty-one brigadier generals are Cedillist. By Cedillist, of course, the weekly

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meant those ready to support a subversive movement against Cárdenas. This is undoubtedly an exaggeration.

Discontent, however, there is in the army; and the Minister of War, although, like Yocupicio of Sonora, a personal friend of Cárdenas, is brother of the allegedly reactionary governor of Puebla. Recently, a leaflet was distributed from the war office and general staff, demanding a two-minute silence in memory of Huerta "who crushed the gangster Francisco Madero."

The army is deeply divided on the question of the new Workers' and Soldiers' Party suggested by Cárdenas as a form of Mexican people's front. The Left complains that this will simply revive the old class of political generals. The Right objects to collaboration with the workers' organizations. The younger officers say privately that the older generals are not being removed quickly enough and that promotion is unsatisfactory. The Cárdenas economic policy threatens to cut into the generals' personal profits.

IT IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE that the approaching movement may take the classic forms of the *cuartelazo* (the uprising of some general with his own garrison), and *gavilla*. But a far more sinister, because more modern, tendency is rapidly coming to the fore. The *cuartelazo* was always "personalist," one "leader's" grab at power, without any very definite program. Now there is a movement for "the defense of the middle-class," with all the earmarks of straight fascism.

There is a suspiciously "international" flavor about this drive, though, naturally, it is strongly nationalistic: "Mexico for the Mexicans." Naturally, too, it talks of "guarantees of social order." It is reproachful about strikes. It is strongly anti-Semitic—though there are few Jews in Mexico. It is all in favor of the "freedom of labor," meaning the free use of scabs. It declares that it is "equally opposed to Communism and fascism." It is violently favorable to Franco, and, being supported by most of the advertising interests, more or less controls the policy of Mexico City newspapers, which headline Salamanca propaganda, although the government has officially and openly done its utmost to aid the Spanish republicans. It has its own organization, the Federation of the Middle Class, closely allied to such groups as the National Reconstruction Party, the Nationalist Association, and, more dangerously, the Mexican Nationalist Youth, which has Catholic affiliations and is strong in the universities.

Numerically, none of these associations is important. Together, they may possess fifty thousand followers. Far more important, these minority groups try hard to influence opinion in the United States. There has been a widespread campaign to show that Cárdenas is under strong Communist influence. To American business circles, Cárdenas's agrarian reform and "capitulation" to labor —in fact the mere enforcement of decent living conditions as laid down by Mexican labor laws—are "rank Bolshevism."

One discredited portion of the Mexican labor movement has recently made a similar attempt to interest United States sympathy against the Cárdenas regime. At least a certain group within the C.R.O.M. in its rearguard action against the C.T.M., has returned to the Villa diplomacy of trying to use two different elements in the United States against its Mexican foes. Just as in Spain, immediately before the civil war, anarchist and fascist tactics were *objectively* allied against the People's Front, and this unconscious but very real alliance was one of the factors upon which the general's advisers chiefly counted, so in Mexico there is an *objective* coincidence between the tactics of one wing of the C.R.O.M. and those of the Dorados, the Association of the Middle Class, and the Nationalist Youth.

Roughly, the position of the C.R.O.M. and C.T.M. is analogous to that of the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. Lombardo Toledano is the Mexican John Lewis, Luis Morones the William Green. The C.R.O.M. made Calles, was greatly favored by him (Morones entered the cabinet) and was finally double-crossed. Cárdenas, when he expelled Calles, also expelled Morones. The C.T.M. obtained the C.R.O.M.'s favored position, and C.R.O.M. policy turned to defending its last possessions and opposing by any means the "turncoats" of the C.T.M.

The C.R.O.M. had been very closely in touch with the A. F. of L. in the days of Gompers, whose portrait hangs beside those of Calles and Morones in its headquarters. The C.T.M. is in touch with the C.I.O. Consequently, although Green takes less interest in Mexican Labor than Gompers did, the Morones group attempts to exploit the old A. F. of L. sympathies, accusing Toledano of being merely a tool of Stalin. This accusation is echoed by Diego Rivera's Trotskyites and by all the fascists and reactionaries.

There is another angle to this drive. Cárdenas's government, which gives to Lombardo the privileges which the C.R.O.M. once obtained from Calles, must also be embarrassed. This is done by causing labor agitation and giving the impression that Cárdenas cannot control it. In return, Cárdenas has publicly stated that he will not give preference to any one labor organization.

Not without significance is the fact that one of the big remaining C.R.O.M. strongholds is the Territory of Lower California, fief of ex-President Abelardo Rodriguez, who is a friend of Calles, exiled just over the border at San Diego. Both Rodriguez and Calles have connections with the big California gambling and racing syndicate which made of Agua Caliente a paradise for movie stars. Agitation here was a cunning stroke, for it is safer to hit capitalist royalties than capitalist roulette. Lower California, too, with its Japanese laborers and fishermen, is of considerable interest to the United States Navy Department.

It is only fair to stress that this tactic is not approved by the C.R.O.M. rank and file and by several sections of the leadership. Nevertheless, it involves both Lombardo and Cárdenas in the false accusation of "Bolshevism," and may well be used as a minor weapon by the A. F. of L. in its fight with the C.I.O.

Cárdenas depends for much of his strength upon the seven hundred thousand workers organized in the C.T.M. These are now forming workers' armed militias. The workers will fight against any fascist attempt, and hope that Cárdenas will be with them to the end.

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It Depends How You Look At It

THE WAY BIG BUSINESS WOULD LIKE IT

THE UNEMPLOYED

William Gropper

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Soviet Justice and Its Foes

A DAY after the Soviet government announced the trial of Rykov, Bukharin, Yagoda, and others charged with espionage, treason, and murder, the capitalist press broke out in an obscene campaign of slander and vile insinuations against Soviet justice. Suddenly the reactionary *Herald Tribune* began to display inordinate solicitude over the prestige of the Soviets. Even before the publication of the indictment, its editorial attempted to impugn the authenticity of the forthcoming trial, hypocritically suggesting that "to the Soviet Union's friends outside Russia it makes further explanations necessary." The Tartuffian New York *Times,* starting from the premise that Gorky favored "moderation" toward the conspirators, concludes its inane speculations with the sentence: "Against such a background of unreason the new state trial begins in Moscow." The notorious Isaac Don Levine, whose wishful anti-Soviet thinking once led him to write an absurd book about the insufficiency of the Soviet Union's natural resources for carrying out the First Five-Year Plan, immediately started a series in Hearst's New York *Journal-American* telling the "real [!] truth behind Moscow's new mass trial."

Not to be outdone by the reactionaries, a motley group of anti-Communists and liberals, knowingly or unknowingly serving as a front for the Trotskyites, also rushed into print. Ignoring the fact that the trial at Moscow will be an open trial at which the accredited correspondents of the world press, as well as representatives of all the embassies, will be present, they telegraphed to the Soviet ambassador in Washington the exceedingly modest request that the Soviet government postpone the trial for six weeks in order to enable a committee chosen by themselves to be present as observers. Without their presence, they asserted, the new "demonstration trial" would "further shake the faith of civilized mankind in Soviet justice." Why Mary Fox and Oswald Garrison Villard are supposed to speak for civilized mankind, and such men as Lion Feuchtwanger, Martin Andersen Nexö, Marcel Cachin, the Webbs, and Romain Rolland speak for barbarism is difficult to understand. But modesty does not seem to be the most characteristic attribute of these liberals.

Pitfalls for Prophets

IT it almost incomprehensible how such people refuse to learn from experience, how ready they are to give the benefit of every sickly doubt to the enemies of the Socialist Soviet Republic. We remember those who loved the Soviet Union so much that they were distressed by the sight of young workers taking military training in the streets of Moscow. Now we know from the terrible examples of China, Ethiopia, and Spain how wonderfully realistic and far-sighted the Soviets were in not heeding the criticism of the soft-headed well-wishers and in building a mighty defensive force which has kept the predatory imperialist powers from their borders.

We still remember how only a few months ago the bourgeois correspondents from Moscow wrote sneering reports about the Soviets' spy hysteria. Now with the growing experience with fascist spies in this country, and with the startling revelation that American passports were actually obtained for the purpose of smuggling German and other spies into the Soviet Union, the silly talk about spy hysteria has suddenly ceased. And what happened when the N.E.P. was introduced, when the Five-Year Plan was announced, and when collectivization of agriculture started? Almost invariably the benefit of their doubts was given to the enemies.

When the self-confessed traitor, Alexander Barmine, former Soviet attaché in Greece, announced in a series of articles in the New York *Times* that Bukharin and Rykov were shot because the Soviet government did not dare to bring them to open trial, the *Times* did not hesitate to publish this news on the front page. And now where is Mr. Barmine with his startling revelations? Only recently the American engineer, Littlepage, told in the *Saturday Evening Post* a story about the Trotskyist wreckers and saboteurs in the Soviet Union. He especially mentioned the name of Pyatakov as that of a wrecker whose anti-Soviet activities he had accidentally observed in Berlin, thus corroborating Pyatakov's confession at the trial. The reaction of certain liberals was typical. The whole Soviet system of justice, the hundreds of pages of transcribed testimony, the reports of all the correspondents and eye-witnesses were not enough to convince them. It took the testimony of one relatively obscure American engineer to make them feel somewhat—though not wholly—relieved about Soviet justice. But then they found other reasons for worry and doubt.

The Case of Mr. Brailsford

THE classic example of a liberal jumping to hasty negative conclusions about the Soviet Union and then finding himself in a dreadfully foolish predicament is Mr. H. N. Brailsford, the English liberal correspondent for the *New Republic.* Over six months ago, shortly after the trial and execution of the Soviet generals, Mr. Brailsford published here in the *New Republic* of July 28, 1937 a heart-rending interpretation of "What Has Happened in the U.S.S.R." His argument was based on an alleged memorandum written by Joseph Stalin himself, giving the "real reasons" for the execution of the generals. In every point the "real reasons" were the polar opposites of the official reasons as given by Voroshilov. The apocryphal document was published in the *News Chronicle* and promptly denied by the Soviet Union. But the liberal Mr. Brailsford naturally refused to believe the Soviet denial. He accepted the fake memorandum and built on it his entire denunciation of Stalin, Soviet justice, and the U.S.S.R. However, there was one little hitch in the whole business. It happened that the memorandum referred to Yagoda, the former head of the G.P.U., as having been shot. This point made Mr. Brailsford a little uncomfortable, and so he put in a footnote stating that "the official statements, so far, have mentioned only his arrest. If he should later appear at a public trial, then the document is a fabrication." Well, Yagoda is now appearing at the public trial in Moscow. The document on which Mr. Brailsford based his bitterly anti-Soviet, Trotskyist article is, by his own statement, a fabrication. And where does that leave the liberal Mr. Brailsford?

A Service to Peace

THE new Soviet trials come at a grave moment in world history. Hitler in his speech to the dummy Reichstag has issued what is tantamount to a declaration of war against not only the Soviet Union, but every democratic country. He has already seized control in Austria and is preparing to do the same in Czechoslovakia. He and Mussolini have forced the resignation of Anthony Eden as a step toward new aggressions in Spain, Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere. The Japanese end of the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo axis is daily, by its undeclared war against China and its constant provocations, menacing the peace of the United States.

In this moment the Soviet Union, by strik-

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ing at this nest of fascist spies within its borders, is performing a service not only to Socialism, but to the cause of world democracy and peace. Sincere liberals are those for whom democracy and peace are more than words. They will be able to judge the sincerity of the slanderers of Soviet justice by the actions of these people in this country. Among the defamers of the Soviet Union active in distorting the plain facts of the new Moscow trials are enemies and disrupters of the most progressive movements in this country. The Soviet government and its great leader Stalin deserve the thanks and support of all sincere liberals for the defense measures they are taking, of which the complete exposure of the Rykov-Yagoda-Bukharin conspiracies is an important part.

Washington Looks at London

REALPOLITIK triumphs over "idealism." Eden's resignation a victory for fascist diplomacy. Chamberlain saves peace of Europe. American isolationism now assured. In such phrases the press of this country chose to interpret the British cabinet crisis, to bless Chamberlain's betrayal of peace and democracy, and to dismiss as inconsequential the growing wrath of the English people. Not only did the press play down the Labor opposition and the hope of a split in the Conservative Party, it rushed to assure the United States that all Washington shared its views, that congressmen and senators were now united against the President's Chicago speech, and that concerted action against aggressors had become for us a dead issue.

The wish was father to the thought, a thought denied the most respectable fathering of facts. What congressmen and senators actually think about the present world situation is not yet apparent. What the administration thinks has been up to now sealed in secrecy. But this much may be said: Washington is profoundly disturbed, by no means unanimous in its conclusions, and for the most part loathe to go on record right now. The cabinet crisis is not considered independently of Hitler's speech to the Reichstag. And that speech threw a real war scare into the Capital. Its immediate effect is undoubtedly to roll up a big vote for the navy appropriation.

But, taken together with the resignation of Eden and the reaction to it in England, as expressed in the protest demonstrations, political rallies, and the resolution of the Labor party executive, Hitler's war-cry has caused a general reconsideration of the whole peace question. Spines of congressional advocates of concerted action have stiffened. The small bloc in the house, on whose activities Representatives Scott and O'Connell recently reported, is going ahead with its hearings on foreign policy. Last week it gained a new member.

Unlike the capitalist press, these congressional observers have great faith in the British masses. They see the issues clarified by Eden's resignation, and remember the Hoare-Laval fiasco. They believe that the offer of United States coöperation for peaceful, economic measures against the fascist warmakers could sweep the pro-fascist national government out and save the day for peace.

There is no immediate hope that their program will prevail. But neither is there reason for despair and a "parallel" surrender such as the press seems prepared to make. On the contrary, there is every reason for keeping up the fight for peace through coöperation with democratic powers. Now, more than ever before, time is of the essence. Many senators and congressmen are wavering and confused. They will listen to the people back home, for they are sincerely seeking guidance. It is imperative that they, and the President, hear the people speak against shameful collaboration with Italy and Germany and for a democratic united front.

Green in the Northwest—

THE A. F. of L. executive council has recently busied itself on the political front in an attempt to split the labor vote. So far the Green forces have met with a severe defeat in Seattle and a rebuff in Pennsylvania. But they never say die in their crusade to set one group of workers against another.

In Seattle, the Green-backed political machine of Dave Beck—with its Red-baiting, anti-C.I.O. program—received third place in the municipal primaries. Their candidate, the incumbent Mayor John F. Dore, was eliminated by the combined efforts of the C.I.O., the progressive Democrats, and the many A. F. of L. unions which were disgusted with the corruption and demagogy of the Beck-Dore alliance. The defeat left progressive Lieutenant-Governor Victor Meyers to contend the election on March 8 with the candidate of big business, Arthur B. Langlie.

The A. F. of L. council's hatred of progressivism will not allow it to be guided by defeat. The danger in Seattle is that Beck will throw his support to Langlie, who is backed by the anti-union Order of Cincinnatus, organized several years ago to combat the growth of unionism on the waterfront and the spread of unionism to other industries. Though Langlie was defeated in his former attempt to become mayor just because of his reactionary backing, the A. F. of L. hierarchy evidently prefers big-business political dominance to rule by progressives. Langlie has hedged himself behind vague statements that "Communism is not the issue of the campaign," and that he is not opposed to unionism "as such," but a candidate must be judged by his supporters. His election would put the anti-labor owners, with their threats of vigilanteism against strikers and their program of potential fascism, into political power in Seattle.

—And in Pennsylvania

BUSY though they were knifing the progressives in the Northwest, the A. F. of L. executive council found time for an attack on labor's economic and political power in Pennsylvania. Four years ago Pennsylvania labor elected Governor Earle and Senator Guffey in the first Democratic victory since the Civil War. Today, a certain section of the Democratic Party is confident that the labor vote is in the Democratic bag no matter what the party does. In consequence, the boys in the back room rejected the proposal of the progressive labor forces that Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Kennedy, secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers, be nominated for governor, and instead named the unknown Charles A. Jones.

It was at this moment that William Green strode into the picture. Frankly admitting his political motives, Green revoked the charter of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor which had endorsed Kennedy. Removal of the charter was expected to split the Pennsylvania labor movement.

But organized labor is not so easily confused. Instead, the A. F. of L. rank and file and the C.I.O. set up a state Industrial Council. And despite Green's manipulations, labor remains a key political factor. By preserving unity on both the economic and political fields, labor and its allies can elect Pennsylvania's next governor and senator.

Federal Aid to Schools

MUCH has been written and said about education and the good life. Now the federal government proposes to do something about it. President Roosevelt has transmitted to Congress a report of the Advisory Committee on Education recommending new federal grants to the states for educational purposes to total $855,000,000 over a six-year period, beginning with the fiscal year 1939-40.

The President's message, summarizing the committee's findings, speaks of "glaring inequalities" that prevail and describes the educational service in many localities as being "below the minimum necessary for the pre-

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servation of democratic institutions." The funds proposed by the committee would be used not merely for the expansion of educational facilities, but "to improve the preparation of teachers and other educational personnel."

The report, as presented in the President's message, is permeated by a spirit of clear and sober progressivism that is in sharp contrast to the reactionary proposal recently made by President James B. Conant of Harvard University for the further restriction of university enrollment. The specific recommendations of the Committee on Education coincide with many that have been made by the American Youth Congress and other progressive groups. Two of the most important of these deal with Negro education and the C.C.C. In regard to the former, the committee proposes "that the federal grants be conditioned upon joint plans providing an equitable distribution of the federal funds between Negro and white schools, without reducing the proportion of state and local funds spent on Negro schools." Concerning the C.C.C. the committee urges that it be removed from its present army control and be placed, together with the National Youth Administration, under the direction of the new National Youth Service Administration.

Another commendable feature of the report is the emphasis it places on the allocation of funds where they are needed most, particularly in rural areas.

Though the New York *Times* regards these recommendations for increased federal expenditures for education as "of doubtful merit," millions of the youth of the land will undoubtedly welcome them. What *is* of doubtful merit is the report's proposal to grant federal funds to parochial and other non-public schools. This appears to be in violation of the principle of the separation of church and state. Other shortcomings are the inadequacy of the proposed expenditures —only $70,000,000 in the first year—and the fact that the program is not to start for more than a year. The national legislative committee of the American Federation of Teachers, in congratulatory telegrams to President Roosevelt and Professor Floyd W. Reeves of the University of Chicago, chairman of the Advisory Committee on Education, has urged that the program of federal aid be launched **immediately.**

Nazi Third Degree

THE entire American press was scooped most emphatically on the historic Schuschnigg-Hitler meeting at Berechtesgaden. That has happened before. But, for some unaccountable reason, no American correspondent in London bothered to cable the juiciest story in the whole Austrian crisis, even after it had appeared in practically all the British papers. The *Daily Telegraph,* which boasts the best pipe-line to Berlin of all the London papers, carried the most complete account of the meeting in its issue of February 15. A condensed version of the *Telegraph* story was given by the *Week* as follows:

He [Dr. Schuschnigg] was first shown into an anteroom where he was actually confronted with well-known members of the illegal Nazi party of Austria, who were turned on to tell him exactly "what they thought of him." Well-coached in their part in this "cracking process," they talked with vehemence and brutality to the helpless chancellor.

It is not hard to imagine the nervous results of such an experience.

At the next stage of the performance, it was not Hitler but four German generals who took the lead. (In fact for a part of this stage, Hitler was not even present, but was conferring with Ribbentrop in an adjoining room.) Without the slightest disguise or dissimulation, or any faint pretense of diplomatic "correctitude," the generals "put it up" to Schuschnigg as a military proposition.

They mentioned the strength of the German divisions ready to move into Austria. They referred to the Austrian army, and the slenderness of its chances of putting up the slightest resistance to invasion if Germany were "compelled" to invade as an alternative to assuming control without invasion.

Characteristically, then, the ultimatum, under direct threat of invasion, was offered not by Hitler himself but by the generals—a procedure probably without precedent in the history of pre-war or post-war relations of independent European states with one another.

Then came Hitler—hours of him. In slightly less direct language, but language equally unmistakable, he declared that unless his demands—involving control of Austria, control of Austrian iron ore for the Krupp factories—were acceded to, he "could not any longer guarantee the continued independence of Austria."

Avrom

Congressmen Take Notice

THE latest findings of the American Institute of Public Opinion poll, operated by Dr. George Gallup, are required reading for every congressman. The institute's investigators asked this question: "Which side do you sympathize with in the Spanish civil war?" Last year, in response to that question, 65 percent favored the loyalists, 35 percent the insurgents. This year, 75 percent favored the loyalists, 25 percent the insurgents. But the loyalists did less well in the second part of the survey: "Which side do you think will win in the end?" Only 46 percent expected the loyalists to win. This makes the response to the first question all the more noteworthy; it means that few favoring the loyalists did so merely because they wanted to be on the winning side. Another noteworthy thing about the poll is that the number of persons with neutral opinions or "no opinions" dropped from 66 percent last year to 52 percent today.

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FORSYTHE'S PAGE

Thoughts While Thinking

WHAT is distressing about foreign correspondents is their lack of completeness. Repeatedly we have read that von Ribbentrop was unpopular in England. Yes, with the *people,* but not with the people who rule England. That should have been mentioned every time his unpopularity was referred to. The stories about von Rippentrop and Lady Cunard and the present Duchess of Windsor were quite true. It is even truer that von Ribbentrop has been a favorite in the great country houses. They happen to be "England."

WHEN von Ribbentrop was recalled as British ambassador to become German foreign secretary, he went not only with a knowledge that England would not move if Germany took Austria but with an unwritten *agreement* to that effect. Keep an eye on the facts if you live long enough to read the letters of this period.

AS AN EX-WINE SALESMAN, von Ribbentrop knows not only the British ruling class mind but its weaknesses. *These* are the real class-conscious people. From the first they have backed Mussolini and Hitler.

THE IDEA that Hitler was taking a chance, or being courageous when he entered the Rhineland, or when he tore up the military clauses of the Versailles Treaty, or when he bludgeoned Austria, is nonsense. He had an understanding in advance from ruling-class England on all these measures.

A RECENT SURVEY showed that over 95 percent of public offices in the British government are held by graduates of what are called the "public" schools. These are, of course, the great private schools (Eton, Harrow, Westminster, etc.) which make such a point of the "old school tie." They dominate the cabinet, the courts, the diplomatic service, the civil service, the church, the foreign office, the colonial and dominion departments. It was the proud boast of the British that even when Labor was in power, the civil service went on as usual, which is true. It did. Put very bluntly, England is a political democracy in which the wealthy and aristocratic classes control the government. Hitler has done the world one favor: he has shown who actually exercises the governing power in Great Britain.

THE REAL STATE OF AFFAIRS in England was revealed for all time during the Ulster rebellion of 1913. Parliament passed laws in regard to Ireland. This was the voice of England speaking, with all the power of the empire behind it. But Ulster refused to obey the laws, formed its own army, and defied the government. This action was backed by the English Conservatives. Officers of British regiments sent to put down the Ulster rebellion refused to obey orders. It was mutiny and treason. But nobody was ever punished. Mutiny is only mutiny when the lower classes use it. Anyone who believes that the ruling-class English would allow democracy to stand in their way in a crisis is forgetting Ulster. Anyone who thinks fascism is impossible in England is a fool.

YOU WILL RECALL that in 1914 an ultimatum was handed to Serbia. By a coincidence, that ultimatum came from Austria-Hungary. Exactly as in the case of the recent German-Austrian ultimatum, acceptance meant the loss of sovereignty for the victim. Europe was shocked at the brutality of Austria-Hungary. The people of England were shocked, but the ruling powers were not shocked. They were busy behind the scenes trying to make a deal. The deal would have allowed the Austrian army to occupy Belgrade as an indication of Serbia's "good faith."

THERE is not an ounce of morals in the British foreign policy. There never has been. It is amazing to me that the world should continue to be taken in by the British.

DOES ANYBODY but Chamberlain believe that Mussolini intends to withdraw his troops from Spain? Does Chamberlain believe it!

THEY ARE GOING to send a commission in to investigate.

ONE WOULD THINK that an English gentleman like Chamberlain who knew that Count Grandi had a message from Mussolini would have insisted on hearing the message before allowing Eden to resign. The message contained the very assurances Eden had previously insisted on, but he didn't see the message.

IT WAS perhaps just as well. Mussolini will carry out just as much of it as pleases him.

CAN IT BE that British gentlemen are not honorable?

LISTEN.

LLOYD GEORGE won the election after the war on the cry of "Hang the Kaiser." That was a fake.

THE FIRST Labor government was overthrown because of the so-called Zinoviev letter which purported to be a call from Moscow to the Labor Party for armed revolution. That was a forgery and a fake.

THE REACTIONARIES overthrew the second Labor government with the slogan: "Defend the Gold Standard." That was a fake. A month after they were in office, they threw out the gold standard.

THE LAST ELECTION was won on the cry of "Defend the League of Nations . . . Sanctions . . . Help for Ethiopia." The voters had barely got away from the polls when Sir Samuel Hoare was forming his infamous deal with Laval to divide Ethiopia. The League of Nations is now entirely jettisoned.

HAVE YOU any notion that Mussolini will withdraw his troops from Spain?

DON'T BE TOO POSITIVE that the British have been blackmailed by Hitler and Mussolini. There is a large body of opinion in England, headed by the Astors (the London *Times*) and Lord Rothermere (the Northcliffe interests) and Lord Beaverbrook, which has been pro-fascist from the beginning. They love being blackmailed in a holy cause.

WILL LONDON BANKERS grant Hitler and Mussolini loans? Three guesses.

DO YOU REMEMBER the Stresa conference which was to guarantee the independence of Austria? Do you recall that while it was going on the British, behind the backs of their allies, the French, were negotiating a naval treaty wtih Germany?

DO YOU REMEMBER the conquest of Manchuria by Japan and the scenes in the League of Nations when Sir John Simon, instead of backing the protests of the United States, made a case for Japan, which was so complete that the Japanese delegate left without speaking, saying he couldn't possibly do as much for Japan as Sir John?

How would you like being a Czechoslovakian?

WHEN ANTHONY EDEN contends that Mussolini hasn't kept his agreements in the past, Neville Chamberlain retorts that Mussolini would have been unable to form future agreements with England because of his dislike of Anthony Eden. The New York *Daily News* will refer to this as realistic thinking.

ENGLAND'S advice to thugs: You may go through my garden to rob my neighbor provided you don't step on my flowerbeds.

THE mental wear and tear will be much less in England now that Hitler is picking the cabinet.

HEIL BRITTANIA!

ROBERT FORSYTHE.

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If This Be Heresy

By John E. Kennedy

THIS is a personal affirmation of faith. I declare my allegiance to the Catholic Church, my church as it was the church of my fathers. And I declare my allegiance to the cause of the faithful Catholics in republican Spain who defended themselves against the anti-Christ of Spanish and foreign fascism. There is no conflict between these two allegiances. Not in spite of my Catholicism, but precisely because of it, do I support with all my heart the cause of Spanish democracy.

By what right do I call myself a Catholic? I am a Catholic first by the fortunate accident of birth. More important, I am a Catholic by conscious choice. The precepts of the Nazarene were honored in my home. As a child I learned to love Him, as naturally as I learned to love my own devout parents. Inevitably, the Jesuit fathers continued the religious education my parents began. I went first to a Catholic grade school, later to a Catholic preparatory school, a Jesuit institution of learning. And finally I attended a Catholic college. Through these school years I found myself always in full harmony with the doctrines and the dogma of the church.

I still find myself in full accord with the religious doctrines of the church.

Obedience to the church was for me always an easy, because a congenial, discipline. The dictates of the church were at one with the dictates of my own conscience, which all my life had been molded by Catholics and Catholicism. It is so today. I am still a practicing Catholic. I hope to remain one until I receive the Last Sacrament of my church. To those who now accuse me of heresy, I can only reply: I am faithful to Him who was the Prince of Peace—*you* are the heretics.

What is the truth about Spain? No one will deny that in that unhappy land Catholics take up arms against Catholics. On the one side, General Franco, the Catholic soldiers of his insurgent army, and the Spanish hierarchy of priests and bishops. These Catholics have strange allies—Moorish infidels; the Hitler who persecutes the Catholic faithful and the Catholic priesthood of Nazi Germany; the Mussolini who murdered the Catholic people of the Basque country and who boasts of his slaughter, the same Mussolini whose son says, "War is beautiful!" On the other side, the people of Spain; the workers and peasants whose abiding faith cannot be questioned; the village priests; the church fathers who have died with their flock. There are Catholics on both sides. A Catholic must choose. I remember another struggle, between Pilate and the son of a poor carpenter, who lived and died for the least of His Father's children. I choose to stand with the people of Spain.

There are Catholics on both sides. This has always been true of Spain, a predominantly Catholic country. Since the sixteenth century there have been *two* churches in Spain, *two* kinds of Catholicism. One in name, but two in fact. One was the true church of Jesus of Nazareth, concerned only with its evangelical mission. Faithful to this church were scores and hundreds of simple village priests, scores and hundreds of Augustinian and Francisan fathers. These humble servants of the Lord were deeply beloved by the Spanish people for their gentle teaching and good works.

But, unfortunately, since the sixteenth century, there has flourished another church in Spain, a church poisoned by worldly ambition, a church fundamentally political rather than spiritual, a church which made money-changers of its priests and turned the House of God into a counting-house. This church and its hierarchy held 40 percent of the Spanish land. It was, and all history shows this to be true, a cruel and a greedy landlord which kept the tillers of the soil in peonage and in poverty.

It was *this* church of Spain, this landlord-capitalist church, this church of political reaction and oppression, which earned and received only the hatred of the faithful poor.

It is said that the Communists teach the people to hate the church. Did the Communists teach the peasants and workers of Spain to hate the Spanish clericals who had perverted the teachings of Christ? In Spain, anti-clericalism predates the birth of Karl Marx by many years and the Russian revolution by more than a century. In 1834 there was a tragic killing of friars in Madrid and

Gardner Rea

"Dr. Schrecklich has just invented a bomb that kills ONLY women and children."

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other parts of Spain. Was this the work of Moscow? In 1909 the convents of Barcelona were burned. Was this by orders of the Communist International, speaking from the womb of history? I do not condone these terrible events, which darken all of Spain's long history, nor do I condone the burning of churches today. But these things have happened; they are historical facts. And it is a fact that anti-clerical violence is no new phenomenon in Spain, no Soviet-Marxist importation. Anti-clericalism is a crime native to Spanish soil, and its seeds were sown and its growth quickened by a corrupt clericalism which seized upon the things that were Cæsar's and betrayed the things which were God's.

In the brief space of this article there is not opportunity to review the long history of clerical abuse in Spain. I refer the doubters to the history books. The well-known Spanish scholar, Salvador de Madariaga (who has remained neutral in the present conflict) says in his book, *Spain,* that of all the clericalisms of the world, Spanish clericalism was the worst.

If, in the past, the Spanish people had reason to regard that part of the church which served Mammon and was served by Mammon as their enemy — how much more reason they have for enmity today!

Let me list a few of the reasons. In the years of struggle for a republic and a better life, the Catholic people of Spain found the hierarchy of the church ever implacable against them. Yet they had churchly authority for their right to struggle by democratic means. They had the authority of His Holiness, Pope Leo XIII:

> A few men have placed on the shoulders of innumerable proletarians a yoke that differs from that worn by slaves. (*Rerum Novarum.*)

And again:

> Let the distribution of property be more in accordance with equity. (*Ibid.*)

But the Spanish hierarchy did all in its power to block the democratic way to a more equitable distribution of wealth. During the elections of 1936, convents and monasteries for centuries closed against the outside world were opened, and bus-loads of monks and nuns carried to the polls to vote against the republic.

The hierarchy used its most powerful weapon against the peaceful desire of the people for a better life on earth. It even threatened them with hell-fire hereafter. Many priests substituted the Ripalda cathechism for the usual Roman catechism, using these important lines:

> *Question:* What sin is usually committed by those who vote liberal?
> *Answer:* Usually mortal sin.

I do not hold with this doctrine. I have voted liberal all of my life. I intend to continue to do so. I am happy that it is not a fact within my church that to vote liberal is to commit mortal sin. If that were true, literally millions of Catholics would have fallen from the state of grace at the last election. These lines should be eliminated from the Ripalda catechism. It is a cruel attempt to dictate political conviction by those who should concern themselves with spiritual matters.

In tampering with the catechism, the hierarchy departed from the wise precepts of Leo XIII, who clearly denounced such practice in these words:

> We must avoid the mistaken opinion held by those who identify religion with a political party going so far as to separate those who belong to another party little less than apart from Catholicism. This, in truth, is tantamount to bringing parties into the august field of religion, to attempt to destroy fraternal harmony and to open the door to a host of difficulties.

The Spanish hierarchy *did* bring political parties into the august field of religion, for the purpose of defeating the democratic progress of the republic. But it failed of its purpose. By democratic process, progress and the republic won at the polls.

Then the hierarchy was indeed guilty of great heresy:

> He who resists authority resists God's commandments, and brings condemnation upon himself. Consequently, to disobey and resort to rebellion . . . is a crime of *lèse majesté* not only human but divine. (Leo XIII, *Immortale.*)

Of this crime of rebellion against legal authority, of the crimes of sedition and violence, the Spanish hierarchy today stands convicted. Its partners in crime are infidels, Nazi pagans, confessed anti-Christians, and professors of Christian faith who shame the name of Christ.

How can the Spanish people, the devout women, the simple Catholic men of that stricken land, today not hate the bishops who justify Franco's murderous adventure? How can they forget the destruction of the holy city of Guernica, or forgive the "holy" men who condone it? How can they, who have had their babies torn from their arms by fascist bombs, believe the priest who tells them those bombs defend His Christian faith? A home in flames, a dead child, a crucifix torn from the wall by flying shrapnel. By their fruits ye shall know them. These are the fruits of the church's alliance with Franco and fascism in Spain.

Catholics in America who would uphold Franco justify their position on the false premise that the choice rests between Franco and Communism. I know this is not true and the record bears me out. I am not a Communist, but I am bitterly opposed to fascism. I do not feel that the Catholic Church should force the Spanish people to accept it, because by spirit, by character, and by heritage they were not made for it. As a liberal American Catholic I feel that a victory for the loyalist government will preserve the republic and the right of the Spanish people to determine by election and by democratic means the form and the spirit of their government.

My heart is with the people of Spain. With the Catholic people whose heroism places them among the great martyrs of history. With the loyal priests, who having baptized and confessed and shriven these people, know that theirs is *not* the mortal sin. My conscience and my religion alike condemn the fascist murderers of these Catholic people. Those who murder in the name of the church are a greater menace to that church than any infidel or Communist. They are priests, and I but a layman. But in Christ's name I denounce their sin. If this be heresy—make the most of it.

Painting by F. Horowitz (Y. U. K. F. Artists' Group)
Pioneer Builder, U.S.S.R.

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Look at Grandma, Dorothy Thompson!

By Ruth McKenney

MY sister Eileen and I regard Walter Lippmann and Westbrook Pegler and Dorothy Thompson and others of their ilk who go around defending the upper classes with cold distaste, to put it mildly.

For Eileen and I have had direct, distressing experience with the *haute bourgeoisie* and their offspring—especially their offspring—and we do not agree with Westbrook Pegler who thinks that because a man has four Packards he is automatically a great American.

Au contraire, as they say in France where they have had experience with these things. In fact, Eileen and I are so bitter about what the upper classes have done to us that we simply can't wait for the happy day when revolution forces all of Walter Lippmann's little friends to work for a living. We realize that this is a pretty drastic idea indeed—I presume Dorothy Thompson would say we were intolerant, but then the upper classes have probably been very careful to keep their company manners on when she's around.

Of course Eileen and I, unlike Miss Thompson, were practically brought up to loathe characters who keep more than six Packard runabouts in the garage and have a terrible time trying to decide whether to troop down to Palm Beach and keep the servants company in the thirty-two-room shack on the southern sands, or whip over to Hawaii and whoop it up on the volcanoes. In fact, we drank in class hatred right along with our childish cocoa and cod-liver oil.

For Eileen and I belonged to the down-at-the-heels or Patrick Farrel branch of the great Farrel family. We learned early to hate people who kept Lincoln sedans complete with uniformed chauffeurs, and time has not softened our opinion of ladies who wear mink capes with lots of little mink tails dangling around the rear waistline. My blood still stirs when I remember that beautiful moment that Eileen attacked Aunt Susan Maloney—the one who wore the mink cape—with a water pistol, crying, "To the barricades," an expression she had learned from a book. It scared Aunt Susan Maloney to death.

Aunt Susan Maloney, like most of the members of the Jonathan Farrel or moneyed section of the clan, looked the part. She weighed something over two hundred and thirty pounds, a sort of walking advertisement for the fact that the Jonathan Farrels could afford whipped cream *every* night. When fully rigged out in the mink tails and a large picture hat in red velvet, with a pink silk rose of generous proportions in the front, she was a sight to frighten small urchins and dismay poor relations. She had a chair made out of moose horns in her house, which cost three hundred and twenty-five dollars, and a hat rack plated with real gold. She was rumored to wear ivory stays in her corsets, and her extravagance, when it came to ordering porterhouse steak, was said by our branch of the family to have no bounds.

Aunt Susan Maloney rode around in a Lincoln limousine as big as a truck, missing by narrow squeaks pedestrians from walks of life humbler than her own, and dazzling most of Cleveland with her magnificence. We weren't dazzled though. We considered the Lincoln a big fraud, and we knew that Jimmy the chauffeur did the Maloney washing when he wasn't pretending (and pretending is the precise word) he knew how to manipulate a gas wagon. For Uncle Pete was able to supply Aunt Susan with the niceties of life, such as a real brass Chinese dinner gong that scared guests out of their appetites, by running a thriving undertaking business. Cleveland's Irish were buried in real style in those days, if they could afford it, that is; and Uncle Pete coined a pretty penny when a policeman, or a councilman, or somebody important like that, died. But prosperous as he was, Uncle Pete never threw money around, and when he had an extra big funeral with lots of mourners, he pressed Aunt Susan's Lincoln into service to cart the customers off to one of Cleveland's better cemeteries. Aunt Susan had to stay home with a copy of Mr. Harold Bell Wright's latest novel and a nice double batch of fresh chocolate fudge.

EILEEN AND I grew up with a hearty distaste for the rich, at least the rich we knew personally, and we've had nothing but double-trouble with such members of the American aristocracy as we've run across since. Dorothy Thompson needn't think Aunt Susan Maloney was the swellest character we ever knew, although I've always thought that ivory corset-stays were an interesting example of conspicuous consumption. For Miss Thompson's information, we've known plenty of bona fide members of our leisure classes, and they were all terrible. I was once engaged in my youth, for instance, to an astronomer named Milford III, whom I met at Ohio State University. He turned out, to my surprise, to be extremely blue-blooded and exceedingly wealthy. You'd never have known it, to look at him. I thought he must have had rickets as a child.

But no. Milford III's mother kept horses, as I found out later, as other women keep chickens. She was famed as a tricky, ruthless sulky driver in trotting races. Unfortunately, I had no idea of Mrs. Brandewhite's little hobbies when Milford III lured me down to old Kintawky to meet his ma and pa, whom I took, from his inaccurate descriptions, to be old, gnarled ex-pioneers. Milford III was never one to boast.

I arrived for the week-end with a few house-dresses, crisply starched, so that I could help do the dishes, and found myself in the middle of an oversized ancestral hall complete with white pillars on the front porch, and a hunt ball in the offing. Milford III's dear old pa turned out to be an ex-general who spent a small fortune collecting postage stamps, and his ma wore pants around all day and flicked dust off well-nigh priceless vases, etc., with a great big vicious whip. The whole thing was terribly embarrassing as nobody could understand why I hadn't brought my riding clothes. Milford III took a typical astronomer's *laissez-faire* view of the situation, which grew hourly more alarming, so far as I was concerned. Finally, I shocked him out of his musings about Saturn's rings with the flat statement that I had never been on a horse in my life and didn't intend to begin now as all of his mother's horses looked like mean dangerous beasts to me, and besides I loathed horses, they smelled. Milford III was rocked to his very aristocratic foundations, and we dismissed our engagement as a bit of midnight folly, which it certainly was, all right.

THESE BRUSHES with the upper classes rather spoiled my taste for the leisure class, but Eileen, with a penchant for the elite, still let scions of this and that meat-packing and advertising family take her out dancing, until at last she met Westchester Willie. After the big Westchester fiasco, we definitely gave up the American aristocracy.

Westchester Willie, when Eileen met him, was a man of mature years and sober visage who lived in Bronxville. He was rather expensively and expansively in advertising, and he was no dope when it came to business. He ran one of those concerns which specialize in writing big, public-spirited ads appealing to the better natures and common sense of men who have so far forgotten their duty to their country and the good of their wives and poor innocent children that they have gone out on a nasty old illegal Communistic strike for fantastic wages and absurdly low hours, such as eight hours per day. The ads were always signed, "Citizens' Committee; Reverend Whoosis, chairman," and were usually labeled in big type, "A straight from the shoulder TALK!" Sometimes Willie used to branch out and do a few campaigns about how the leading industry of some little town or other was going to move right out and leave everybody to starve, much as they hated to do it, unless those factory workers came to their senses

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and realized it was dumb to kill the golden goose. The goose was Willie's client of course, although sometimes the ads, headlined, "PLEASE don't move out, we're behind you!" were not signed by the goose, but rather by the local Bar Association, all of whose six members ran around looking up ways to dodge the corporation tax for the dear old company.

The reason I enlarge on how Willie earned his living is because it played rather an important part in his relations with my esteemed sister. Eileen met Willie at a cocktail party. He came right over and started the ball rolling by saying he had fallen in love with her at first sight.

"Pooh!" Eileen murmured, but somewhat flattered all the same. How was she to know this distinguished looking gentleman paying her such ardent court was a rat who went around getting up citizens' committees to talk straight to the shoulder to honest C.I.O. strikers?

Willie was quite a suitor. He began by sending Eileen camelias with a cute little note inside the box about, "Be My Lady of the Camelias," which caused us some concern until it developed that Willie did not precisely understand about why Dumas's heroine never moved in polite society. So the next time he sent lilies, apparently for purity.

Just as romance was really beginning to blossom and Willie was starting to be a familiar sight in our little cabin in Greenwich Village, Eileen ran afoul of some dubious rumors about her beau. She put it up to him squarely. Was or was it not a fact he chummed around with Tom Girdler and tried to do the N.L.R.B. dirt? Willie was flabbergasted. Of course it was true, he shouted across the table at the Madison cocktail hour, and why not, pray tell? How could a man better serve his country than by getting up citizens' committees to end nasty old industrial conflicts?

"Louse!" Eileen replied haughtily, and rose to exit.

But Willie was genuinely bewildered. These things are, you see, all in the point of view. He couldn't really believe Eileen was giving up a nice big house in Bronxville not to mention Willie himself, peerless public relations man, just because he had voted for Landon.

"There's another man! This is just a paltry excuse," he growled, looking fierce.

"You Republican!" Eileen hissed, "I never want to see you again, pooh for you!"

But Willie couldn't take no for Eileen's answer. He kept calling up and talking about other men Eileen was probably in love with, that irresponsible W.P.A. writer named Joe, for instance. Willie said he thought he probably would have to kill Joe. Grandma arrived in the middle of these big telephone conversations, and we talked the whole situation over with her. Grandma is very backward politically, and she couldn't see why Eileen wouldn't marry a Republican. We finally had to tell her that Willie drank (cocktails) before she agreed that he was no man for her granddaughter.

We three ladies gossiped about Willie and this and that until very late and finally we put Grandma to bed, doused the lights, and let slumber come. About 3:40 a.m. the telephone rang. The phone was right beside Grandma's bed. Startled out of a sound sleep, Grandma reached for the receiver and muttered, "Hello." Now Grandma has a naturally deep voice and she was still waking up by degrees, so her "hello" was hoarse and deep bass.

"Aha," roared the voice on the other end of the phone, "So you're the guy! Now I know! Aha!"

Grandma hung up and murmured to her sleepy granddaughters who were now sitting up in bed, "Wrong number, somebody wants a man. No man here. Go to sleep."

We fell back on our pillows. Two seconds later the phone rang again. "Hello," growled Grandma, her voice hoarser in the darkness and by this time quite angry.

"Listen you," shouted the voice, "don't you hang up on me again, you. . . ." Then followed some bad-tempered, upper-class profanity.

"Wrong number!" Grandma shouted, "and don't you use such language to me, young man. There's no man here, just the McKenney girls live here."

"And who are you?" the voice yelled, "I suppose you aren't a man?"

Grandma hung up. "Crazy man," she reported briefly. "Go to sleep, girls, you have to work in the morning."

The phone rang again. "God damn it," Eileen said, sitting up again. Grandma said, "Such language, go to sleep." Then she picked up the receiver and said, "Now you look here young man, I am a woman seventy years of age, and don't you talk to me again the way you did or I will call the police!"

"Ha, ha," the voice screamed, "go ahead, call the police; I suppose you're Eileen's old grandma, ha, ha!"

"I am," Grandma growled, very hoarse.

"You're not Joe, of course?" The voice was heavily ironical.

"Joe!" my grandmother replied furiously. "The idea! At my age, somebody should call me Joe!"

Then she put her hand over the mouthpiece and said, "Girls, somebody wants to talk to a man called Joe."

"No Joe here," I mumbled, fighting in the darkness for sleep.

"There isn't any man by the name of Joe here," Grandma reported back to the telephone.

"Ha!" the voice sneered, "who are you?"

Grandma hung up. We settled back. The phone rang. "Hello, Joe?" said the voice.

The fifth time the phone rang Eileen got up, turned on the light, found her slippers, and talked to Willie. "That's no man," Eileen said irritably. "That's my grandma."

"Here," she said to grandma, "say hello again, so he'll understand."

"Hello," said Grandma, forgetting to clear her throat.

There was no reasoning with Willie. He kept calling up every five minutes, laughing fiendishly, and promising to give Joe no peace. Just as dawn broke Grandma seized the receiver, took a deep breath, and roared, "This is Joe speaking, what the hell do you want anyway?"

It was the first lie Grandma ever told in her whole life, and we blame the breakdown of her character on the upper classes. Let Westbrook Pegler or Dorothy Thompson answer THAT.

Colin Allen

"Very clever indeed, Mr. McGirk, but I still want the rent."

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READERS' FORUM

"The People's Front"

TO THE NEW MASSES:

I WISH to object strenuously to some of the statements made by Mr. Boudin in his review of Browder's *The People's Front.* It seems to me that there is a sizeable series of misconceptions in the latter part of his review.

Briefly they are as follows:

1. That Robert Hunter's theories had anything like as much to do with "the ultimate wrecking of the Socialist Party" as Boudin says. It simply is not true that it was Hunter's stand "which led to" that wrecking. Many other factors were involved, the largest of which were right wingism, American exceptionalism, and anti-Sovietism, together with the anti-political bias of syndicalist sections of the party and the pro-war policy of 1917.

2. On the question of the "little businessman." How can Boudin be so mechanical? (a) He seems to take the conference of "little businessmen" in Washington at face value, which is ridiculous. (b) He does not define, generally, the term "little businessman." And (c) he forgets completely the fact that the little businessman in most cases *is* useful in the class struggle.

Who were the "little businessmen" at the Washington conference? How little were they? What kind of little businessmen were they? Were they manufacturers or merchants? Who selected them? To every thinking progressive that conference smelled to high heaven of special selections by big business, and even of prearrangement. Where were the storekeepers of Akron? The merchants of Pennsylvania's coal towns, etc.? To accept that conference as the voice of little business is simply to fall into the trap of pessimism which that conference had so carefully set.

Who is the little businessman Boudin refers to, anyhow? Are all little businessmen "volunteer retainers of big business?" Are we then to take the position that we cannot work with any but the working class? To arraign the whole small independent business class thus is to be as un-Marxian as the Mormons! One never categorizes that way. The little businessman falls into a hundred and one different categories according to his business, its location, the strength of the working-class movement in the town of his business, etc.

And as to the taxation angle, it is obvious to all that the plaint of little business against taxes is wholly correct, whereas that of big business is wholly incorrect. The qualitative change (to be technical for a moment) which takes place in the quantitative increase in the size of a business net income from $5000 to $5 000,000 a year is just that! In the former case taxation is unjust and cruel; in the latter it is an imperative form of social control as well as a means of revenue. The little businessman has a perfect right to howl against taxes. It does not make him an enemy of the working class automatically. We must know and understand that one never can thus arraign a class as an enemy or a friend. If we do, we stop working among them, labor turns against them, and they become enemies.

Most important, Boudin seems to forget that the little businessman has been a crucial factor in many current labor victories. This holds true especially in the political victories of the C.I.O. at the last elections; it equally holds true in C.I.O. defeats which can be marked down wholly to just such sectarian, "all-working-class" policies as Boudin seems to put forth.

Boudin takes the ridiculous position that the small businessman is not revolutionary—does not conclude "that he would be better off in a non-business world"—and therefore is reactionary. This is so harmful and so wrong a theory that I wonder at the NEW MASSES printing it! Ninety percent of American organized labor is not revolutionary today. Does that make the labor movement reactionary?

I think that Boudin would do well to weigh his opinions and his conclusions on a little more realistic set of scales than that which balances "world revolution" against everything else and thereby warns us from sullying our hands with the obviously petty-bourgeois elements. His stand would lead us to a complacent submission to fascism!

New York City. GROFF CONKLIN.

More on "The People's Front"

TO THE NEW MASSES:

THE review of Earl Browder's *The People's Front* by Louis B. Boudin in your issue of March 1 was as provocative as it was puzzling. There was much in the review with which Communists are in agreement. It was strange, however, to find Mr. Boudin end his review on a note entirely at variance with the fundamental theoretical bases of the people's front. From the rest of his review, it would appear that Mr. Boudin is in substantial agreement with Mr. Browder on the need for a people's front; despite this, the last fifth of the review actually cuts the ground beneath practical efforts to realize it.

Mr. Boudin chose to conclude his review with a long, and not entirely relevant, section on the "little businessman." His viewpoint, in its most extreme form, assumes that little business "may be expected to be more reactionary than big business—at least in intention." Little business, then, is not more reactionary than big business only because it lacks the power. Mr. Boudin rests his case almost entirely on psychological grounds; only in passing, as a sort of grudging concession, does he admit that "in the actual conduct of business the small businessman feels himself crowded by big business." But, concludes Mr. Boudin, this makes him all the more tenaciously reactionary and the inevitable supporter of fascism.

All this, if true, would be discouraging. But it is not true, at least, not in the absolute form presented by Mr. Boudin. Certainly the little businessman is more susceptible to fascism than are the workers or professional groups. But "more susceptible" must be understood with conditions. If the labor movement is firm and united, the little businessman will be less, rather than more susceptible. If a people's front policy is flexibly and correctly carried out, he will be less, rather than more susceptible. It is only when the "seductions" of big business are not adequately exposed for what they are worth, when the labor movement itself, either through disunity or confusion, is not able to stiffen the spine of the middle class generally, that the mass of little businessmen will support fascism.

Psychology is not enough. If it is true that "the small businessman feels himself crowded out by big business," then the small businessman will reject and oppose fascism because fascism is the instrument of the very biggest of big business. Of course, this is not inevitable. It depends upon the work done by anti-fascists to explode the myths of extreme reaction. Mr. Boudin on the other hand is a believer in a very pessimistic inevitability—the inevitability that the mass of little businessmen will go fascist. There is nothing inevitable in this; indeed, any such premise is surrender to fascism in advance. This may not be Mr. Boudin's intention, but he cannot evade its consequences.

The fault lies, I believe, in too much absolutism. Because little business is not independently revolutionary or, under certain conditions, is liable to surrender *en masse* to big business, Mr. Boudin swings to the other extreme and makes it even more reactionary than big business "in intention." There is just as much danger in exaggerating the little businessman's progressive character as his reactionary character. The first leads to disillusionment; the second leads to surrender. To assume that the mass of little businessmen are lost to the fascists under any and all conditions makes impossible that people's front against fascism which must reach from the basic layers of the working class to all those, including the little businessmen, who feel themselves "crowded by big business."

New York City. ROBERT STARK.

Journalistic Ethics of the "Post"

TO THE NEW MASSES:

THE questionable journalistic ethics of the New York *Post* in its recent handling of news from the Soviet Union confronts American progressives in the East with a serious problem. Despite not infrequent lapses, such as its call for the incorporation of trade unions, the *Post* was without question the afternoon newspaper that liberals most frequently turned to for accurate news and progressive policies.

But the malpractices of the *Post* in its handling of the already famous Stalin letter to the Young Communist Ivanov indicate a turn that must be properly evaluated. To get the full flavor of what the *Post* did, one must carefully follow the *different versions* of the story that appeared in the *same edition* of the *Post* of February 14. The early press run of the night edition (the first daily edition) had the following two banner headlines: "Fascism Wins Hold in Canada" and below it: "Stalin Calls World Labor to Defend Soviet." Then followed a two-thirds column A.P. dispatch with a very sober account of the Stalin-Ivanov exchange, including *this* sentence: "He [Stalin] failed to mention Communism, however, or advocate the overthrow of capitalism in other countries."

Before that night edition had completed its press run, however, the *Post* had received the U.P. version of the story and proceeded to do an almost unprecedented thing in journalistic history. It reset the entire first page, put on the following two-line streamer headline: "Stalin Calls on World Labor to Prepare for Revolution," and apparently changed the U.P. story itself so that it is unrecognizable when compared with the U.P. story that appeared in other papers (*cf.* the *News* or the *Mirror*, neither of which tried to develop a Soviet-scare out of Stalin's letter). So we have two night editions of the *Post* of February 14! Why the unseemly haste? We reserve answer on that.

Was there a really significant difference in the A.P. and U.P. stories? The *Post* saw one, especially in the translation of certain grammatical forms. The U.P. dispatch as printed in the *Post* gave the following version of one important paragraph (the italics are mine): "*We must* also increase and strengthen international proletarian ties of the working class of the U.S.S.R. with the working class of bourgeois countries. *We must* organize political help of the working class of bourgeois countries to the working class of our country in case of military attack *and equally* organize help by the working class of our country to the working class of the bourgeois countries." In this version, Stalin seems to be saying that the Soviet government, in violation of all its international agreements, such as the Litvinov-Roosevelt agreement, is going to interfere in the foreign affairs of other governments and organize the workers of capitalist nations. Against such interference there might be legitimate objection.

But in reality that was *not* what Stalin wrote. On this both the complete text of the letter as published in the *Daily Worker* of February 17 and the A.P. dispatch of February 14 as it appeared in the *Post* (first night edition) and the *Herald Tribune* agree. The *Daily Worker* text reads: "The international proletarian ties between the working class of the U.S.S.R. and the working class in bourgeois countries *must be strengthened*, the political assistance of the working class in the

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bourgeois countries for the working class of our country *must be organized . . .*"

Now that is quite different! Stalin had actually laid down certain objective considerations without which certain conditions (final victory of Socialism) could not be met. That is *not* the same as threatening to intervene in the internal affairs of another country, as the "we must organize" version would seem to have Stalin doing. Apparently the all too shrewd editors of the *Post* saw this difference at once, and could hardly wait an hour before switching from the A.P. to the U.P. version.

It is against his background that the *Post* editorial of the following day must be understood. Taking its title from the *Völkischer Beobachter,* the *Post* announced: "Stalin Takes Off His Mask." It begins with an italicized emphasis on the "we must organize" section and conveniently puts a period right in the *middle* of the sentence, leaving out the portion in which Stalin asserts that the Soviet proletariat must organize help for the working classes of other countries (as it has done for Spain, for China, for Ethiopia, for France in the Franco-Soviet pact, in Czechoslovakia, in Mongolia, etc.). Then it proceeds to the basest kind of attack on the Soviet Union, on the people's front, on labor unity, on Isaacs's appointment of Gerson, and practically on the whole developing progressive movement.

Apparently thousands of readers protested the *Post's* attack, although probably few of them observed the development of its campaign as I have tried to show it. In this country, larger and larger sections of the population have turned from the mirage of isolation to the haven of collective security as the road to peace. Collective security must involve the American people in peaceful cooperation, for its *own* protection, with France, England, the Soviet Union, the Netherlands, etc. If you can raise a Soviet-scare and frighten the people away from this concerted action, then you can lure more people into the swamp of isolationism and big navalism. *Is that why the "Post" acted with such haste to change heads and stories in the same edition?*

But the journalistic crimes of the *Post* have an even more disgusting and revelatory sequel. On February 21, the night edition contained an editorial on the Soviet scientists who had already been rescued from the ice floe. Whereas the *Times,* the *Herald Tribune,* and the *World-Telegram* had hailed the intrepid scientists as heroes, the *Post* editorial interpreted the fact that the rescuers and rescued were in no great hurry, and carefully evacuated their camp in order to carry back all the scientific instruments and data *as an indication that Papanin and the others feared to return to the Soviet Union lest they be shot!* How base this editorial is can be seen from the fact that the *Post did not dare reprint it in the second edition* and took it out! Progressives are faced with this problem: if the *Post* does not explain its unethical conduct and remove the cause, they will have to look around for a forty-foot pole with which not to touch the *Post.*

New York City. MORRIS U. SCHAPPES.

Juggling Relief Figures

TO THE NEW MASSES:

THE $250,000,000 deficiency appropriation for W. P. A. seems to be assured of final passage. With the furor of its quick progress nearly over, it might be wise to inquire just what that money will do for the unemployed.

There seems to be a great deal of confusion on the question. Aubrey Williams, acting administrator of W. P. A. during Harry Hopkins's illness, believes that the $250,000,000 will buy something like 500,000 new jobs in March, a hundred thousand less in April, and descending numbers until in June W. P. A. will return to its present employment level. The President, in his letter to Speaker Bankhead, expressed the opinion that the requested appropriation will maintain present W. P. A. employment until the end of the fiscal year. Representative Cochran of Missouri, however, told reporters after the House Appropriations Committee hearing on the request, that without the money W. P. A. would be forced to fold up for May and June, that is, the $250,000,000 will just keep the program running until the new fiscal year.

The strange part of it is, that all opinions may be right, merely by an administrative act of reshuffling the works program funds now available. No matter how the bookkeepers go to work on that $250,000,000, however, *one fact remains clear, it does not begin* to provide enough jobs for the three million new unemployed in the last few months, and there is strong doubt whether it can do more than keep the works program running until the new budget for 1938-39 is passed.

There has always existed a great deal of confusion concerning the make-up of the works program. W. P. A. is only part of it and therefore any consideration of funds available must allow for the fact that outside W. P. A. many agencies are carrying out relief programs and spending money out of the same source, the Emergency Relief Administration acts of each year. In fact, since the beginning of the works program, W.P.A. has spent only 52 percent of the total amounts disbursed by the program. At present the agencies outside W. P. A. are spending between forty-five and fifty millions monthly on their projects, and this expenditure would naturally affect the employment on W. P. A.

According to the United States Treasury report of the end of last year, the works program had exactly $948,190,883 unencumbered on January 1. With this amount, the works program still faced the hardest months of the fiscal year, and it was forced to increase its expenditures during January to approximately $185,000,000 and the February expenditure promises to top $200,000,000, including the general program plus C.C.C. costs. By March 1, only $565,000,000 of the original appropriations will remain, or enough to carry the present employment to the middle of May if every possible form of economy is practiced. Therefore, merely to continue the present pace of employment through the end of June would require almost every cent of the additional $250,000,000 obtained.

Then where is the "extra" employment coming from? It might be accomplished by reducing the activities of the works program agencies, other than W.P.A., for the remainder of the year, thus reducing employment from this source to increase it in W.P.A. This, of course, would be a bookkeeping change of no benefit at all to the unemployed. Another method which may be utilized, and which is excellent propaganda, is an increase of employment on W.P.A. by 500,000 in March and a compensating decrease in such employment below the 2,000,000 now employed, during the other months. With this method, however, the sum total of employment for the last four months of the fiscal year would remain the same, and nothing will have been done for the new army of unemployed.

It is likely that the latter plan will be adopted for it is in line with the W.P.A. officials' past behavior. Employment will boom in March and thereafter all kinds of reasons will be found to explain the wholesale reductions. Last July, when close to 500,000 pink slips were handed out, it was because of "increase in private employment." The fact that most of those fired were forced to apply for home relief almost at once, was denied by Harry Hopkins, until the sudden jump in relief applications forced him to admit it. This year, there is no doubt that in the South, when the cotton season begins in April W. P. A. projects will close up and workers will be thrown into the slave conditions of cotton work, receiving an average pay of 7½ cents an hour instead of the 16 to 18 cents an hour paid by W.P.A. In increasing W.P.A. employment now, without asking for more than the $250,000,000 additional granted, officials are banking entirely on the possibility of an employment boom in the spring.

In order to cope with the new relief demands, the works program would be forced to request at least $400,000,000 additional to provide employment for the 1,500,000 new unemployed already on relief or soon to apply before the end of the fiscal year. No sleight of hand can expand the present sums to fit the real needs and no arithmetical trickery can hide the fact that the federal government is doing little to help the new unemployed find jobs.

Jamaica, L. I. JOSEPH BANKER.

Vigilantes in Illinois

TO THE NEW MASSES:

THE article entitled, "It Happened in Illinois," by Sasha Small, appearing in your issue of February 22, very accurately describes the highlights of the activities of the Vermilion County vigilante mob which styles itself the "American Patriotic Club." There are a few additional facts and recent developments that we feel need public attention and action.

On February 3, the cases of John Sloan, Ernest Guiliani, and Frank Suchaczewski came up for a preliminary hearing before Justice of the Peace Ben Seibert. The small courtroom was packed with miners and students from the neighboring town of Champaign, Ill. State Attorney O. D. Mann immediately moved to have the courtroom cleared. The defense attorneys made a motion to hold the trial in the spacious circuit court. Overruling the defense lawyers, the judge proceeded with the trial only after the spectators voiced their sentiments against the attempts to hold a star-chamber proceeding.

The complaint signed by Sheriff Harry George charged the miners with violation of the Illinois criminal syndicalist act, to wit: feloniously and maliciously distributing a paper that would overthrow the government of the United States and the state of Illinois. The sole evidence introduced was a leaflet directed to the citizens of Westville, members of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, businessmen and liberty-loving men. It denounced vigilanteism and violence, and urged the people of Westville to attend a public mass meeting at the City Hall to voice their protest. All eight witnesses who stated they had received copies of this "seditious leaflet" were members of the vigilante American Patriotic Club. Defense Attorney Quilici, after analyzing each of the sentences of the leaflet, stated it was a great American document!

The judge bound all the men over to the grand jury when the state attorney said, "Judge, I think the grand jury should have this so they can decide if a crime had been committed here." All the miners were immediately released when a number of local friends put up six thousand dollars bail.

On February 9, we contracted with local radio station WDZ, located at Tuscola, Ill., to broadcast on February 18. Several days before the broadcast, an agent of the station called us, long distance, and stated that the contract might be canceled because several local people objected to our use of the air. We have definite information showing that these same vigilantes were behind this move. The agent admitted that there was nothing objectionable in the script of the talk, but said the issue was controversial. The title of the talk was, "Americanism in Vermilion County."

On February 18, we received a wire from Mr. Clair Hull, manager of the WDZ Broadcasting Co. saying that the date was not available. We immediately wired the secretary of the Federal Communications Commission, protesting this as a clear case of discrimination against us and violation of our constitutional rights.

Protests against the attempt of frame-up of John Sloan, Ernest Guilani, and Frank Suchaczewski should be sent to State Attorney O. D. Mann and Sheriff Harry George of Danville, Ill. Protests should also be sent to the secretary of the Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D. C., and the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee, *asking to investigate and take immediate action.*

Funds are also desperately needed to carry on the defense of the miners, and should be rushed to: 30 North Dearborn Street, Room 400, Chicago, Ill.

LILLIAN GOODMAN,
Chicago, Ill. International Labor Defense.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Laws of Dialectics

A PHILOSOPHY FOR A MODERN MAN, *by H. Levy. Alfred A. Knopf.* $2.50. (A Book Union Choice.)

A NEW book by Professor Levy is an event for those who know the work of this earnest and gifted British scientist. *The Universe of Science* first brought Levy before the American public. For a great many of us the book was a milestone in our theoretical development. Levy coolly demolished Eddington and Jeans and ruled all spiritualism and philosophical idealism out of the sciences. He expounded the nature of the scientific process, centering his exposition in the concept of the isolate, and throwing new light on the problem of scientific determinism. He denuded mathematics of all traces of Platonism and set it soundly on a social and functional basis. Eloquently he explained the social responsibilities of the scientist and his relation to the working class. Subsequent to the publication of this book, Professor Levy's participation in a discussion in the British *Labor Monthly* showed that he was aware of the political implications of his thought and was seeking to clarify the relationship between his analysis of scientific method and the philosophy of dialectical materialism. A short but significant sequel to *The Universe of Science* was his *Science in an Irrational Society,* published in England in 1934. Since that time various articles have appeared, such as that on probability in the second issue of *Science and Society,* all of which led one to hope for still further analyses and a more comprehensive synthesis from Levy. This hope is fulfilled in the present book.

The most striking feature of *A Philosophy for a Modern Man* is its organic unity. The first sentence states its thesis:

> For ordinary men and women a philosophy will have meaning and importance when it is based on the assumptions the material world forces them to make in their practice of life, when it illuminates their relation to the world and to society, and so acts as a guide to conduct.

From this Levy proceeds through the problems and techniques of scientific analysis as they manifest themselves in human thought and practice in a material world, analyzes the nature of cause and change as they appear in society, and concludes with a chapter entitled: "What It Means for You and Me, *or The Unity of Theory and Practice,*" which is the starting point over again, now enlightened by the whole course of the intervening analysis. This analysis enables him to conclude that:

> For us the problems of philosophy are resolved into those of guiding ourselves and others toward this classless society. Our philosophical theory has to emerge in political practice.

John Strachey sought to expound a similarly unified world-view in his *Theory and Practice of Socialism,* taking as his starting point the contradictions in capitalist economy and the success of Socialist economy in the Soviet Union, and building on this foundation an edifice that included dialectical materialism, the arts, and culture in general. Levy, as a mathematician and physical scientist, on the contrary, starts with the theory and practice of science, viewing science always as a human activity conditioned in its course of development by the needs and desires of men. His aim is to show that the application of the principles and methods of science to changing human society leads to, or rather, *is* historical materialism, and in our own day, the theory and practice of scientific Socialism.

This is not to imply that human motivation as determined by the class nature of capitalist society does not enter into the process. Levy states explicitly that "If men are to become causal agents in the orderly construction and reconstruction of society, they must become so in virtue of their desires and their biases." Thus Levy admits to being a propagandist but would insist that he is not for that reason less a scientist. For he is attempting "to see the part that human desires do play in bringing about the history that men make," in order to enable us by scientific understanding of the direction of social development and of the next "logical" phase of society to help bring it about "deliberately and with enlightenment."

Chapter One concisely sketches in the major tenets of modern materialist philosophy, starting with the existence of the universe, its changing character, the existence of human beings with their changing consciousness of the world about them, and ending with the priority of matter, and mind as a quality of matter. Levy dismisses neatly the argument of some of our super-scientists that "matter is

Freda Weinsweig

out of date." Having laid this foundation, he proceeds through 164 closely argued pages to develop the principles of scientific analysis and the laws of change. He shows that to get scientific knowledge of anything, *i.e.,* of a quality or a mode of behavior, we must isolate it from the wider group of things in which it exists, study its internal structure or processes, and then replace the isolate in the environment from which we have mentally separated it, and now reëxamine its internal structure in the light of the wider situation, and vice versa. This, like many other phases of his work, is illustrated with copious examples from many fields of science and daily life and even presented pictorially through some amusing drawings.

He then distinguishes between group qualities and atomic qualities (showing, of course, the relativity of the distinction), and hence between atomic isolates and group, or statistical, isolates. These distinctions enable Levy to steer easily between atomism and organicism, between mechanical analysis which destroys the thing analyzed and such seeing of things as wholes that makes all analysis impossible. On this basis he can recognize the emergence of order at one level out of disorder at another, the forming of new qualities or group patterns by atomic isolates brought into relationship, and the development of the animate out of the inanimate without recourse to such concepts as those of creative and emergent evolution.

But most important of all, and the high spot of the present work, is Levy's quest for and development of a generalized law of movement. Through many examples borrowed from divergent fields, and following the methods used by the sciences, he arrives at a formula for the transformation of a quality, or for what, as he himself says, Hegel and the dialectical materialists know as the transformation of quantity into quality. It is impossible to go into the details of Levy's formula here. Levy himself must be read for its development. He has enlarged and deepened this particular "law of dialectics" by giving it a precise and concrete formulation which can apply alike to the phenomena of the physical, biological, and social sciences. To Levy it is clear that this dialectical law is a reflection in consciousness of objective processes in the worlds of nature and society. This analysis alone makes his book an important contribution to dialectical materialism.

It is unfortunate that Levy, perhaps because of his roots in the British tradition, so shuns the terminology of dialectical materialism; also that he does not attempt to do for the other two dialectical principles, ***viz.,*** the unity or interpenetration of opposites and the negation of negation, what he does for this one. But as the present work represents a concretization and development of his earlier

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thought, it is to be hoped that he will go on to bring in the whole of dialectical materialism. Even his own analysis indicates that the other principles are implied by this one, just as this one is by the others. Levy perhaps does not yet fully admit the necessity and cogency of the unity of opposites and the negation of negation. Be that as it may, this analysis of the relation of quantity to quality is worth ever so much more than are the ordinary reiterations of the same principle without any effort to probe its meaning further.

It is interesting to note that the phenomenalist tendencies of Levy's *The Universe of Science,* which had given way to a considerable dose of pragmatism in *Science in an Irrational Society,* nowhere appear here, and that the pragmatism of the second book is almost entirely gone. One must say "almost" gone, for it suddenly obtrudes itself in the last page of the book in his account of truth, in spite of a materialist statement a few pages earlier. This is particularly unnecessary in view of Lenin's careful analysis of truth in his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism.*

There is much valuable material in the last two chapters on social development and our place in it. The analysis of the present impasse of capitalism and of the inevitability of the transition to Socialism is cold and clear, even if wanting the concrete richness of Dutt or Strachey. Levy is simply trying to sketch in briefly what we get when we apply the scientific principles he has developed earlier to the social scene. The chapters contain many insights and sharp observations which deserve the fuller development he has given to the more general problems of scientific analysis. Occasionally he slips into a loose statement, such as that all parties on the Left in Germany equally ignored the middle class, or a careless formulation, such as that which suggests that the program for a people's front must be a Socialist program, and negatively that the democratic framework is not likely to break, short of its use toward the abolition of private profit. But there is much excellent material in these chapters, some of it eloquently written.

One cannot close an account of *A Philosophy for a Modern Man* without reference to the illustrations that enliven its pages. The frontispiece wittily satirizes Sir James Jeans's *This Mysterious Universe,* while other drawings help one to picture vividly as isolate (the "fish out of water"), the relation between external and internal qualities, the dawn of statistics, how an isolate can be torn from its context (the hiker in a hurry), and the struggle between content and form in the guise of a fat boy bursting out of his clothes.

Professor Levy has given us a valuable work, and it is appropriate that his book should have been published in a large edition in England for the Left Book Club and recently selected here by the Book Union. It should be particularly stimulating to American men of science and students of philosophy who are seeking a method of dealing with the social problems that confront them and

Aaron Sopher

who do not understand dialectical materialism as the scientific philosophy designed for precisely the purpose of understanding and transforming society. HOWARD SELSAM.

Escape from Devil's Island

DRY GUILLOTINE, *by René Belbenoit. E. P. Dutton & Co.* $2.50.

RENÉ BELBENOIT'S unsparing account of his fifteen years' "living death" in France's notorious South American penal colony, will shock even those who have been partly inured to inhumanity by the current newspapers, radios, and movie houses. Belbenoit stole a necklace; for that crime—although the necklace was recovered and returned—Belbenoit was sentenced to eight years at hard labor in French Guiana. His sentence there was lengthened because he made four unsuccessful attempts to escape; in the fifth he reached the United States, and although he was emaciated, had no teeth, and owned only the ragged clothes on his back, he writes that he was "no longer afraid." He may not be afraid, but the United States will deport him in March, and there is a decided likelihood that this brave man, unless something can be done to help him, may eventually have to face again the "administration" he has attacked in this book.

Although the name, Devil's Island—the island where Dreyfus was kept—has captured popular imagination, the penal colony is actually synonymous with French Guiana itself. The larger number of the several thousand convicts are held on the mainland and only the most refractory men—and political prisoners—are sent to the three misnamed Isles du Salut (Islands of Health). It deserves to be much more widely known and realized that France's single remaining possession in the Americas has been used since 1852 as an exterminating ground for her rebellious citizens and that since 1852 her free and emigrating citizens have shunned it.

Seven hundred prisoners are brought to the colony every year, and with a criminal population of around three thousand, seven hundred regularly die each year so that the population remains constant. If overcrowding tends to develop, certain "regulating camps" are used where, by working men waist deep in water and by other extreme practices, the number of *forcats* is more rapidly reduced. "The policy of the administration is to kill, not to better or reclaim," Belbenoit writes. Hardly any element which might contribute to the process of extermination is overlooked—starvation, inadequate clothing, torture, and finally the lethal practice of condemning men to one-, two-, and three-year stretches of solitary confinement, the "guillotine seche" from which the book takes its name.

In conclusion, I should like to quote a penetrating, sensitive passage in Belbenoit's book about the psychology of prisoners; from it much may be learned about the psychology of all imprisoned human beings.

The psychology of the place at first frightens them: for the axiom of life in French Guiana is every man for himself; self-interest reigns supreme and is at the bottom of every action. Each man revolts inwardly against everything. Reduced to a struggle for bare existence, they shut themselves up within themselves for refuge. They are miserably lonely—but, to each man, each other convict appears incapable of sympathetic understanding or appears to be an evil character: for they all, with a warped perspective, see each other at their worst, when they are looking with their hearts for someone unattainable to talk with, to confide in, to lift them out of that hell. They hunger for someone "all right" to talk with. But they withdraw within themselves and encase themselves in a world of their own. Many acquire the habit of talking to themselves; it is a sort of a safe communion which, to some extent, brings relief. There is no helping of one another, no coöperation; for there is lack of good faith, lack of trust, among men of this type, particularly in this environment where life is stripped of all civilized sentiment. Individualism, egotism, take the leading role in guiding their actions, and every prisoner suffers in this exile from the devouring restlessness which is one of the factors in his obsession to escape.

MILLEN BRAND.

British Labor Since the War

THE POST-WAR HISTORY OF THE BRITISH WORKING CLASS, *by Allen Hutt. Coward-McCann, Inc.* $2.75.

THE resignation of Anthony Eden from the British cabinet roused the Labor Party to demand a vote of censure which if successful would have compelled a general election. The immediate response of six million workers and anti-fascists to the Labor Party's position and the organization of week-end demonstrations revealed that despite past vacillations the Labor Party has responded forcefully to a serious emergency. However, mistaken policies pursued in the last decade have made it difficult for the Labor Party to overthrow the Chamberlain government.

Allen Hutt's superb *The Post-War History of the British Working Class,* with its main accent on labor's political role, explains the

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past dilemma of the Labor Party. This mature analysis of the social and political development of the labor movement—an analysis made possible by Hutt's Marxian insight—has for its lesson the fact that the primary necessity of a Socialist Party is to be Socialist. By repudiating principles on which the British Labor Party theoretically rested, the party floundered until it became merely an adjunct of reaction. Instead of offering guidance to the working class, it bogged down in reformism and misled the working class into collaboration with its exploiters. After almost twenty years as one of Great Britain's two major political forces, the Labor Party was responsible for the existence of the present cabinet with its desire to conciliate the fascist war-making nations.

Once it won office, the British Labor Party adopted the policy of choosing what it considered "the lesser evil." The majority of party leaders soon lost their fervor even for reform. Their service to the working class was to order the police to club the unemployed, to sell out strikes and restrict the labor movement, to slander the Soviet Union and legislate against civil liberties. The mere mention of Communist Party affiliation with the Labor Party aroused the MacDonalds and Snowdens to hysteria, but they were willing enough to use their influence to assure the election victories of the tories. They refused to resist the government's rearmament program though they supported non-intervention in Spain and thereby reinforced fascist aggression. Their abandonment of Socialism—the theory of which they never understood and never studied—transformed the Labor Party into a political grouping indistinguishable from the reaction it supposedly opposed.

As a result, Labor Party leaders grew more anxious to bait their supporters and to apologize to their enemies than to take political initiative. They exhausted their energy in witch-hunting and remained apathetic toward the problems of the unemployed and the workers—though they managed to stifle the voice of the rank and file.

German Social Democracy, from which the top officialdom of the British Labor Party failed to take warning, capitulated to fascism. The leaders of the labor movement in England gave the British fascists a free hand and often more than passive support. But the resentment against the misuse of power of Ramsay MacDonald and his cabinet now promises to revivify the British Labor Party. Sir Stafford Cripps and Harold Laski, recently elected members of the Labor Party executive, are firm supporters of united action with the Communist Party and advocates of militant struggle of all progressives against fascism. Within the Labor Party itself, the resistance to reformism grows: leaders such as C. R. Attlee increasingly repudiate MacDonaldite acquiescence to reaction and gravitate toward a policy that will reflect the militancy of the majority.

To understand British foreign policy, it is necessary to understand the internal situation in Great Britain. Hutt's keenly perceptive history presents the story of post-war labor dramatically, in a manner that does not demand of the American reader a detailed knowledge of English events. His treatment is a model of historical writing, a model that reveals the lack of a similar book on the recent history of the American working class. It is written with the simplicity and wit which distinguishes so much of English Marxist writing; and Hutt's descriptions of the days immediately after the World War when revolutionary strikes threatened British capitalism, of the general strike of 1926, of the unemployment demonstrations in the thirties, have the vivid impact of first-hand labor reporting.

But the great value of Allen Hutt's *History* to the American labor movement is that it can serve, as Professor Harold J. Laski writes in his Foreword, as a guide to "save the working class of the United States from some of the mistakes we have made."

BRUCE MINTON.

Myth for Our Time

HEARKEN UNTO THE VOICE, *by Franz Werfel. Translated by Moray Firth. Viking Press.* $3.

FOR his latest novel, *Hearken Unto The Voice,* Franz Werfel has utilized a variant of the historical method—a method which has been employed in our time by such diverse writers as T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, and Thomas Mann. Viewing the present as an era of wavering and uncertain values, these writers establish terminal points of moral reference by bringing the complexities of the present into focus with the historical patterns of the past; and it is obvious from the prologue and epilogue of the present work that Werfel intended his fictional version of an

John Heliker

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Old Testament chronicle—the story of the prophet Jeremiah—to have some such mutually retroactive meaning. Indeed, in the closing pages of the novel, he speaks through his modern hero, Clayton Reeves, and says: "Jeremiah was a sensitive man, who was implacably opposed to his world and his age. Though he was timid, even the evident and potent iniquities of this earth could not vanquish him. For he obeyed none other than the voice of God, which spoke to him and within him." Since the kinship between Reeves and Jeremiah has already been indicated, the allegorical implication is, of course, that the modern world's doom was foreshadowed in the destruction of Jerusalem; and only those who obey the voice of God, like Reeves and Jeremiah, can hope for safety in the inevitable conflagration.

It would be futile to quarrel with the truth or falsity of Werfel's mysticism: such a quarrel would be irrelevant to the main issue, which is simply whether an unquestioning acceptance of Biblical material on its own terms is sufficient justification for the composition of a novel. Where Thomas Mann has reinterpreted the Joseph myth with all the subtleties of psychological symbolism, Werfel merely adds a few pages at the beginning and the end; and in so doing omits almost completely that clash of perspective which gives the historical method its peculiar relevance to our time.

As a result, the novel is converted into a tedious moral tract, with none of that ironic ambivalence of meaning which is so integral a part of Mann's design, and which would have charged the story of Jeremiah with significance for the contemporary reader. In spite of the lavish hand with which he fills in the anthropological and religious background, Franz Werfel's version has none of the harsh grandeur of the original; and since he has brought nothing to the original except the embellishments of ornamental detail, his novel fails to justify itself as a work of art.

JOSEPH FRANK.

Adventure and Love in Loyalist Spain

THE WALL OF MEN, *by William Rollins, Jr. Modern Age Books, Inc.* 25c.

WILLIAM ROLLINS'S *The Wall of Men* is the first romance to be written about loyalist Spain since Franco started his ill-fated drive on Madrid more than a year ago. Against the background of the present civil war, Rollins depicts how the typical village of Morino, in the Basque country, under the leadership of two young Communists, José Aldez and Dolores Garcia, shook off the deceptions and provocations of the Catholic Church and the fascists and prepared to defend itself against Franco's Moors, Italians, and Germans.

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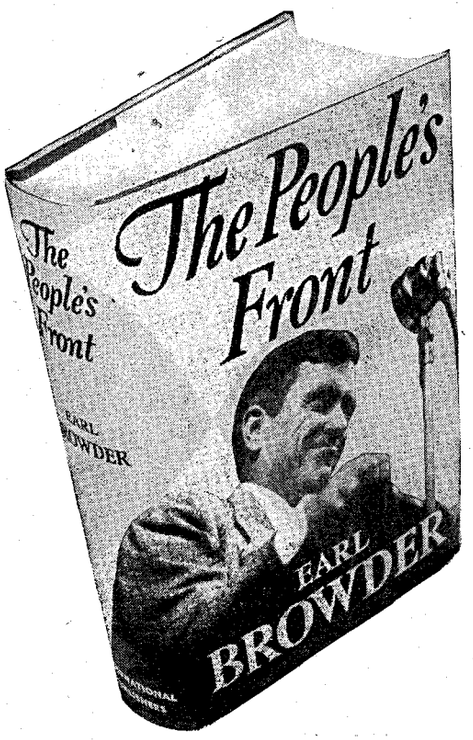

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opens on the Magdalene's feast day when Father Mario secretly plots with fascists to burn a church as a signal to turn public opinion against José. Father Pedro, a priest sympathetic to the people's cause, overhears the plot, and is slugged and thrown into a dungeon because he is considered too dangerous. Lured to the church just before the fire starts by a note to which is attached the forged signature of his fiancée, José is cast into prison amid a Reichstag fire atmosphere. Escaping with the aid of his comrades, José makes his way to the Communist lines and is wounded in action. He seeks refuge in San Sebastian at the home of his cousin, who in turn attempts to betray him to the invaders. Trapped in his cousin's home, José shoots his cousin and assumes his cousin's identity in time to deceive the fascist military officials. He poses as an intelligence agent of the fascist high command and is given work to do in the military headquarters, where he is all but betrayed by Rafael Aznar, a young acquaintance of fascist sympathies, who knew him in Morino. Through sheer bluff, José convinces the officials that Rafael is jealous and is trying to betray him because of Dolores. As a result, José is granted freedom but is placed under surveillance.

Contacting local Communists, José hears that Morino, his village, is about to be attacked. His comrades arrange for him to run the gauntlet of the fascist lines and warn the people. Necessary credentials are obtained by a daring ruse; to distract the attention of the fascist guard while José is sacking a desk at headquarters, Vicente, an old loyalist, deliberately places himself in a position to be killed so that the authorities are thrown off the trail long enough for José to escape during the excitement.

José returns to his village disguised as a fascist, makes certain of the expected attack, and rescues Father Pedro, who explains to the villagers who their real enemies are. The attack on the village is temporarily repulsed, but that is only the beginning of a long and bitter war. Dolores is at the side of José when he declares that "We Spaniards are a wall of men, standing against the attacks of all the forces of darkness!" The story closes with the appearance of the first members of the International Brigade—Americans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans—and the drone of the planes of Hitler and Mussolini.

This is a new kind of revolutionary fiction, a fiction which retains the popular figures of hero and heroine but places them against a fictional background which is serious and meaningful. All the hairbreadth escapes, love scenes, spies, wild midnight rides, dungeons, kidnapings, the villain and the beautiful girl, etc., are here; added is that element of truthfulness which makes them more than entertainment. *The Wall of Men* may be the beginning of popular mass pulp fiction in America, a brand which can be read with pleasure by workers, without the danger of their becoming doped or misled.

RICHARD WRIGHT.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Two Specters Haunt the Boards

THE Group Theatre last week presented Robert Ardrey's *Casey Jones*. The play is about an aging railroad engineer, who takes such fanatical pride in his craft and is consistently so unreasonable about it, that his behavior, objectively, is that of a typical company man. The express train is Casey's Moloch to which he sacrifices everything, including his own daughter. All his life he has served and worshipped the Moloch railroad, an attitude which by a process of transferrence becomes slavish devotion to the company that owns the railroad. In his old age he is going blind. Nevertheless, he persists in running his train—not because he wants to retain his job, but because he is "loyal to the company." Even when he is forced to retire, he refuses a pension on the grounds that "the company owes him nothing and he owes nothing to the company." Two minutes before the curtain Casey's monomania collapses. He realizes that all his life he has been the slave, not the boss of the railroad.

This sudden "conversion" ending only accentuates the static character of Mr. Ardrey's play. The railroad about which Mr. Ardrey writes is not that instrument of extension of power which has been to the bourgeois what the road was to the Roman, the ship to the Spanish Conquistador; but rather the mythical railroad of the schoolboy's dream when he *"wants to be an engine-driver."* Realistic matters such as imperialist extension, joint stock-companies, and unionization don't enter into Mr. Ardrey's play. Possibly he did not intend them to. Possibly he intended merely to portray the craftsman in love with his craft. If so, one has a right to expect that his individual example should be more than a romantic freak having no connection with anything at all. Conceivably this Casey Jones belongs on Zane Grey's *Roaring U. P. Trail.* He has no more to do with the realities of the railroad than Henry Ford's much-publicized "contented workman" had to do with the realities of Fordism. His last-minute conversion has no logical motivation whatsoever. Casey's revolt doesn't come about through an identification of himself with his class; it is simply an anarchic intensification of his own individuality. He has remained an individual, unassociated with his class, from beginning to end.

Thornton Wilder once referred to the play as genuinely proletarian. The term proletarian describes a class: the industrial workers. It is true that Casey in this play is an industrial worker; but he is an exceptional one, an oddity. He is, so to speak, an infertile individual cell which does not secrete the universal; and that precisely defines bad art.

As usual with Group Theatre productions, the play is well staged. Mordecai Gorelik's settings are worth seeing on their own account, especially his fantasia on a railway-train which has the excitement of a Dickens stagecoach, the power of a St. Gaudens horse. The acting labors under the burden of a confused script. Van Heflin is an actor who, though still playing mostly by sheer intuition, adds to his technique at every new role. Charles Bickford gives Casey Jones the required degree of dignified and intense mindlessness; Robert Strauss sketches a convincing mild old man; the others, including Peggy Conklin, Frances Williams, and Joseph Sawyer, Curt Conway, Charles Dingle, act ably.

The second production last week was at the Theatre Guild: Mr. Behrman's *Wine of Choice,* directed by Herbert Shumlin, with settings by Lee Simonson. Well, there is no doubt about it. A specter is haunting the Guild. For the third time this season the Guild stages a play about a liberal, and for the third time the bright atmosphere of the drama is darkened by the specter of Communism. This time the dramatist actually comes to grips with the specter in the full glare of Mr. Shumlin's lighting. He exposes, denounces, and exorcizes the specter.

But first let's get the plot outlined. A group of rentiers and other parasites on Long Island. Alexander Woollcott ambles and coos about the stage thinly disguised as one of the group with a heart of gold, who likes to deliver witticisms of this kind: "Today there is a cult of the poor, just as in the middle ages there was a cult of the insane." Also there is a girl, the Girl (well acted by Claudia Morgan), who has worked her way up by the usual means from a slum to Oyster Bay. Also a senator from New Mexico, a liberal among Indians apparently, upon whom Mr. Behrman dispenses his authorly benediction, and to whom Leslie Banks brings oll his charm and skill. Also a young novelist, a "kind of Communist" (made almost credible in spite of Mr. Behrman by Theodore Newton), who has just written a book about the share-croppers in the East. The senator from New Mexico is very much in love with the Girl; the Girl is about to become a movie-star at the expense of a nice uninquisitive young capitalist rentier (Donald Cook) who is also very much in love with her; and she is very worried because she is very much in love with the young novelist; the young novelist is very much addicted to what Mr. Behrman calls "ideology."

At the end of the second act the Girl and the novelist go the way of all flesh in these conversational dramas; and we have the situation familiar to students of bad taste or French farce—the couple in the bedroom upstairs, the inquisitive and the uninquisitive lovers in the room below.

Finally in the third act the senator from New Mexico confronts the novelist and assails him (a) adopting the tone of an irate papa, because the novelist won't marry the Girl; and (b) adopting the tone of the New York *Post,* because the novelist is a Communist. The novelist, whose only pretension to being a Communist is his good manners, goes away;

Recently Recommended Plays

One-Third of a Nation (Adelphi, N. Y.). The current issue of the Living Newspaper, headlining the lack of adequate housing for President Roosevelt's 33 1-3 percent, and emphasizing the need for action. Thoroughly documented, witty, and admirably produced by the Federal Theatre.

The Shoemaker's Holiday (National, N. Y.). Alternating with *Julius Caesar* and produced by the Mercury Theatre, Dekker's play represents with vigor and authority the Elizabethan love of life. A bawdy and lusty comedy that must be seen.

The Cradle Will Rock (Windsor, N. Y.) Marc Blitzstein's anti-fascist play, using music and satire as implements in the people's fight. Brilliantly produced.

A Doll's House (Broadhurst, N. Y.) A splendid performance of one of Ibsen's best, with Ruth Gordon, Denis King, and Sam Jaffe.

Pins and Needles (Labor Stage, N. Y.). A sprightly social revue, sponsored by the I.L.G.W.U. and staged by union members. Hit tunes by Harold Rome and a lively book give the cast something to go to work on. Two companies are soon going on the road.

Recently Recommended Movies

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. Mark Twain's story of kids on the Mississippi, now in technicolor.

Gold Is Where You Find It. Some healthy analyses of the gold fever of the pioneer West. Has a good documentary introduction showing industrial and agricultural methods in California before the time the story takes place. In technicolor.

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The Dybbuk. A touching picture of Jewish life under the influence of cabalistic doctrines.

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Mickey Mouse's maker makes his first full-length picture. Good entertainment for adults and fun for the kiddies.

The River. Pare Lorentz's story of what we've done with the Mississippi that Tom Sawyer played on. Every phase of river life is captured by the photographer and there's a grand swing to the free verse by Lorentz.

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the senator from New Mexico perorates about the "American dream," kisses the Girl, and hurries off to keep the Indians safe from "ideology"; the Girl flops in a chair and reflects that all "this had to be" and she is an "individual"; and evidently there's nothing more to be said about it, for precisely at this moment the curtain comes down.

In outline this is Mr. Behrman's *Wine of Choice*. Written by the least ingenuous of American dramatists, its crudity is concealed by an embroidery of wit, its seriousness by an embroidery of sexual intrigue. The problem Mr. Behrman proposes is ingeniously presented to the audience as a matter of which of the men is going to end up in the bed of the girl: actually the problem is this: man for man, which is the better, the liberal or the Communist? Mr. Behrman plumps for the liberal. To the novelist the senator says in effect: "You are a Communist. You are incomprehensible to me. I will fight you to the last gasp—with guns, if necessary." Because Mr. Behrman is as bewildered by the Communist as the senator from New Mexico, it is necessary to reply on behalf of the silent novelist: "You, Mr. Senator Behrman, are a liberal. I understand you very well. You enjoy Long Island and its rentier intelligentsia. Very well. You want to preserve them. Again, very well. You believe that your talkative friends cannot exist except under a democracy and therefore you must defend democracy. Once again, and for the last time, very well. It, too, am interested in preserving democracy, not only for the American Indians and American rich, but for everybody. Your friends, unfortunately, are more concerned to preserve their capital than to preserve democracy. You are a well-intentioned man, Mr. Senator Behrman, but you are a foolish blind man. You do not see that the friends to whom you turn to help you save democracy are already faced with the choice of destroying democracy or losing their capital and have already chosen the former. You, too, must choose: between democracy and your friends."

To which one day Mr. Behrman, one sincerely hopes, will be able to reply. Meanwhile he cannot reply, for he doesn't recognize the existence of any such choice. He never doubts that the futile, decadent people he writes about are the salt of the earth. He cannot even elicit from them a Chekhovian pathos: to him they are not pathetic, they are splendid. He actually admires them, and records with pride their talk and habits. When the realism of his intellect forces him to a point where he must admit their hopelessness, he frantically twists about in search of palliation and excuse. They may be futile, but they're loyal; they may be decadent, but they're chivalrous; be parasites, but they are capable of love, they are the dreamers of the American dream. (All of which Mr. Behrman's Communist is not.) The result is that Mr. Behrman's dramaturgy degenerates into a sort of strip-tease act. He exposes a portion of the body politic and immediately covers it up again to the accompaniment of a coy titter of wit. All his craft and fluency go to obscure the real issues his play raises; and the fact that real issues emerge from his play, in spite of all his efforts to conceal them, is an indication at once of Mr. Behrman's honesty and the untenability of the liberal position he tries so hard to maintain.

MICHAEL SAYERS.

Robert Taylor's Prattfall

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER has removed some of the stuffing from the shirt of their profitable Robert Taylor. In *A Yank at Oxford* (Capitol, N. Y.), he is seen in brazen déshabille, revealing the debated hair on his chest, and adding a further dramaturgic achievement to his repertoire—the prattfall. Try as they will to roughen him up, they are unable to conceal altogether his comely charm.

The plot, executed by no less than six writers and an idea man, hums with misunderstandings and noble lies to shield the honor of Cardinal, the Oxford college which Bob attends. He is a cocky American who amazes the toffs with his footracing, rowing, and readiness to take the rap for the next fellow's breach of medieval etiquette. Hollywood's reverence for the unbelievable code of English high life makes one fear that the tea in Boston Harbor is in momentary danger of being dredged up and handed back to Neville Chamberlain with Louis B. Mayer's apologies.

Bob has a personal servant who delivers extended soliloquies on tradition when he hears the bells of Magdalene (pronounced "Maudlin" and rendered the same way). Between affairs of honor, Bob strokes the crew to the

Tom Funk

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Charles Martin

head of the river in the big six-day bump race and wins the 440 without taking off his cap and gown. It's called *A Yank at Oxford,* but it's more like a pull at the leg.

There is a marvelous new animal film at the 55th Street Playhouse, N. Y., *The Adventures of Chico,* made by the Woodard brothers in Mexico. Chico is a small Mexican boy who lives in the stony desert of northern Mexico, where his only companions are animals and a brave bird, the roadrunner, or *paisano.*

The roadrunner duels with a huge rattlesnake in a scene which beats any dramatic climax I have ever seen. The narrative is spoken in Chico's own broken English—a touch of great charm.

The animals have been photographed with patience, humor, and authenticity. Take every child you know along to see the armadillos, the raccoon-bears, the deer, the quail, and the big rattlesnake battle.

On the same bill with a Mickey Mouse short, the animals of the Woodard brothers did not suffer from the comparison. *Chico* is a rare and beautiful picture.

The boy calliope, Bobby Breen, is spraining the architraves of select movie palaces in a number called *Hawaii Calls.* Which way is Iceland?

"SNOW WHITE" made such melody on the cash register that the producing pack is in full cry after animators and stories for full length cartoon features. This is very much like the rush of newspaper publishers thirty years ago to expand the daily comic strip into the Sunday color page. The movie cartoon has the same folk popularity as the Sunday comics. It is really more of a cartoon than it is theater. Cartoonists make it and use the camera rather than the linecut to reproduce it.

This idea is important because it throws a light on some of the shortcomings of the animated cartoon. A cartoon is inevitably satire, or at least, whimsy, the indifferent sister of satire. Such caricature has no place for the good, the true, and the beautiful, except by inference. Snow White and her silly crooner prince didn't come off, not because they were humans in a world of animals and dwarfs, but because they were virtuous abstractions among creatures of more character. The dwarfs, the wicked queen, and the animals were true because they had weaknesses, jealousies, and prejudices. The animals were more human than Snow White.

The animated cartoon is the most nearly universal art form. Barriers of language, cus-

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tom, degree of education, and age do not hamper the enjoyment of the movie cartoon. The Soviets caught this idea when they made *The New Gulliver,* which was the animated film predecessor of *Snow White.* They went logically further and realized that the animated satire was a superb medium for a social theme. Instead of Disney whimsy, Ptushko and his puppeteers made a story of class struggle.

Curiously enough, *The New Gulliver* had the same aesthetic weakness as Disney's picture —the virtuous characters did not jell. The proletariat of Ptushko's Lilliput was not as real as the dunce King and his villainous ministers. Sympathetic characters in a satire must have understandable attributes like Candide or Schweik, the Good Soldier, of Hasek's great war comedy.

Mussolini has announced his intention of producing a fascist animated cartoon. The humorless inanity of fascist culture will undoubtedly turn the thing into a wonderful argument against fascism.

In the meantime, the people of the world should have an anti-fascist movie cartoon. Could anyone ask for a better cast of characters than Mussolini, Hitler, Hirohito, and Frank Hague? It would be almost too easy.

Notes of the Week: Jean Renoir has produced a great film for the French People's Front, *La Marseillaise,* which opened in Paris two weeks ago. A special print was shown in Hollywood. Peter Ellis reports that it made the Hollywood boys glum with envy. Horror Note: Warner Bros. are reported to have asked Paul Muni to "create" the role of O. O. McIntyre in a film biography of the late columnist. Title Change: Paramount's *The Stooge to Rainbows in the Night.* Dr. Goebbels has raised the quota of American pictures to refill the theatres emptied by the local *ersatz.* Walt Disney is making *Pinnochio,* and next, *Bambi.*

JAMES DUGAN.

Ballet Caravan's "Filling Station"

FOR the W.P.A. Federal Music Theatre's Festival of American Music, Lincoln Kirstein's Ballet Caravan presented for the first time in New York its homespun ballet on the traditional roadside gas station. *Filling Station,* it is called, and it is taken up with the every-day adventures of such down-to-earth characters as the cocky and thoroughly human attendant, a couple of young and energetic, horse-playing truck drivers, a sympathetic comic strip of a Sunday-driving family, a cavalier of a gunman in an unfortunate and unsuccessful stick-up, and a bepolished Gilbert-and-Sullivanish state trooper. The rich girl and the rich boy are squeezed into the story to give the ballet its traditional adagio and its touch of decadence and nostalgia, but they are intruders, two-dimensional people who don't belong in the more robust working-

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world setting and don't come off too well. They might easily have been dispensed with.

Lew Christensen, responsible for the choreography of the composition, did an excellent bit of work as the the attendant, and was ably supported by the corps. *Filling Station* is a milestone in the history of the native troupe, and the Ballet Caravan is doing a good job of revitalizing an academic tradition in the theater.

Paul Cadmus, who shocked the Navy Department with his picture of sailors on leave in his W.P.A. Riverside Drive canvas, *The Fleet Is In,* designed the apt costumes for the ballet, and its set, I presume. Virgil Thomson, who we heard at the NEW MASSES concert, was responsible for its elegant musical score.

Other recent appearances on the concert stage, and all at the Guild Theatre, were Waldeen from California, Huapala with her Hawaiian musicians and dancers, and Sai Shoki, who comes from Japanese-exploited Korea.

in the modern technique but her work is ideologically tied up with her earlier ballet training. She moves well and exhibits a sensitivity for composition, but her dancing is too obviously limited by sentimental, romantic, and mystic thematic materials.

Huapala does the hula, the grass-skirt dance which is a combination of much hip swinging and completely simple and naïve pantomime. There is very little imagination in her work and less variation, but people who have some acquaintance with Hawaii seemed to like it.

Sai Shoki is a personable dancer with a nice sense for sympathetic satire and grotesque masks. Her dances are primarily native character sketches, which come off best when they are simplest and most lyrical. Chung Wan Kim, Korean artist, was credited with the elaborate costumes. OWEN BURKE.

★

Forthcoming Broadcasts

(Times given are Eastern Standard but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups)

Questions Before Congress. A senator talks on current problems before the Senate, Fri., Mar. 4, 3:30 p.m., and a representative on those before the House, Tues., Mar. 8, 4:45 p.m., C.B.S.

"Rigoletto." Metropolitan Opera Co.'s presentation of Verdi's opera, with Bidu Sayo and Jan Kiepura, Sat., Mar. 5, 1:55 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

William E. Dodd, former United States Ambassador to Germany, guest speaker at American Civil Liberties Union luncheon, Sat., Mar. 5, 3 p.m., N.B.C. red and C.B.S.

Modern Age Books. A dramatization of Leonard Erlich's novel, *God's Angry Man,* Sat., Mar. 5, 9:30 p.m., WABC.

Orson Welles and Alexander Woollcott introduce Hamilton College Glee Club program, Sun., Mar. 6, 2 p.m., C.B.S.

Dr. Harry F. Ward, professor of Christian Ethics at Union Theological Seminary and president of the American League for Peace and Democracy, speaks on "Can We Avoid War?" Wed., Mar. 9, 10:45 p.m., C.B.S.

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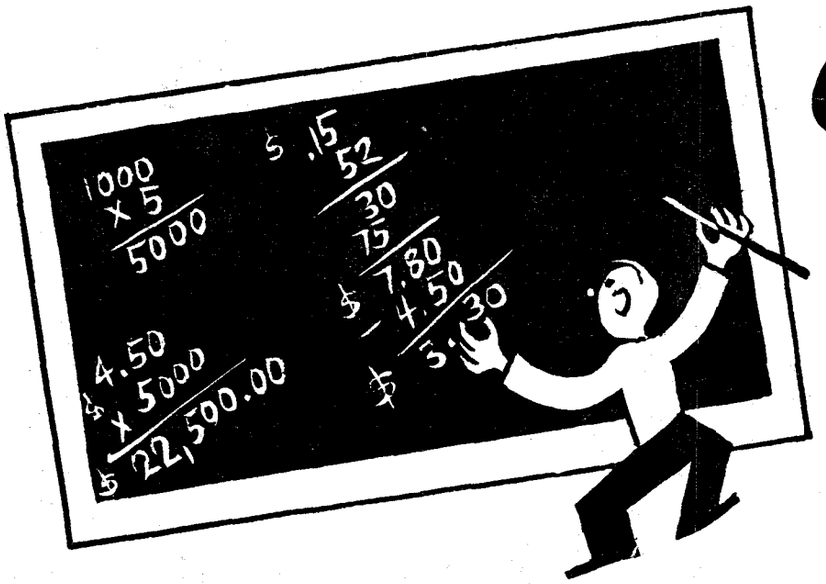

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